FIRST EDITION PDI's first presidential debate draws presidential candidates (in alphabetical order) Noynoy Aquino, JC de los Reyes, Dick Gordon, Jamby Madrigal, Nicanor Perlas, Gibo Teodoro, Eddie Villanueva and Manny Villar join hands on Monday before the start of the Philippine Daily Inquirer's 1st Edition Presidential Debate at the UP Theater in Diliman, Quezon City. MIKE ALQUINTO

No-holds-barred forum

Noynoy Aquino

"I get constant advice from Kris for my wardrobe but she recognizes that she is more matarabasa and I'm not.

"I speak my mind and I follow my own leads. I am open to opinions even if they are the complete opposite of mine. But at the end of the day, I have to be responsible for all my actions."

JC de los Reyes

"The way a politician handles his money, his campaign style, reflects the way he is ... I believe that if you are in sense, there should be a message that conveys principles and platforms and not simply campaign messages that just say 'I am poor' or 'I am this or that.' It destroys values, it destroys ideals."

Dick Gordon

"No president wants to raise taxes. That's unanimous ... *Patagpo ko nam bubota lahat kami rito kung sasabihin na hindi ito/wag ang taxes, eh. Kailangan talaga'n castle angat ka/nakaupo ganito (to nothing around) o? Hindi!* There has to be sacrifices."

Jamby Madrigal

"I will not accept any campaign contributions from big business, that's my policy.

"We'll never progress unless you dismantle the oligarchy cartels, especially from the Marcos time. Ninety percent of the big businessmen are still Marcos people. Justice has not been done."

Jamby steals show at PDI debate

Of 'GG,' salted eggs and hair dye

By Volt Contreras and Jerry Esplanada

IT WAS THE "GG" QUESTION SHE DIDN'T see coming.

Even the most combative speaker in yesterday's historic 1st Edition Presidential Debate had to make a guess and put up an

OF 'GG' | A17

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

LIKE THE FILIPINO DELICACY *balut*, the first INQUIRER presidential debate was not for the faint-hearted.

Pointed and witty queries ranging from the price of "gulonggong" and salted eggs to Charter change and the budget deficit, sharp briefers and a lively audience marked the event at the jampacked University of the Philippines Theater in Diliman yesterday.

Senators Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, Richard "Dick" Gordon, Ana Gonzaga "Jamby" Madrigal and Manny Villar, Comelec Chair JC de los Reyes, environmentalist Nicanor "Nicky" Perlas, ex-Defense Secretary Gilbert "Gibo" Teodoro and evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva faced a tough grilling by nine panelists, who also read questions from ingenious readers, and several members of the audience.

NO-HOLDS-BARRED: A13

THE SCORECARD
Social notes, show biz buzz

THE INQUIRER ENTERTAINMENT and Lifestyle editors took notes of who's who and what about them during the presidential forum. Here's their report.

- Most applauded answers: (In this order) Sen. Jamby Madrigal (on Sen. Manny Villar's ads), Gibo Teodoro (his mother-in-law) and Dick Gordon (on Erap's rerun)
- Mothers-in-law favorite: Gibo
- Most substantive answers: Dick, Gibo, Nick Perlas
- Best smile, also most approved: JC de los Reyes
- Most rousing welcome from audience: Gibo and Manny
- Most eye-grabbing attire: Jamby Madrigal in citrus green jacket
- Most 'shedma': Manny Villar, the only one in the hall who showed no visible reaction to

SOCIAL: A13

Audience wanted answers to questions but not asked

By Minerva Gonzales, Cyril L. Bonabenta and Elisa Victoria
Inquirer Research

SOME 60 QUESTIONS WERE asked in the first-ever Philippine Daily Inquirer Presidential Debate held yesterday at the University of the Philippines (UP) Theater in Diliman, Quezon City, but those who came were still left asking.

Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III should have been asked about Hacienda Luisita, "and why he has not done much as a senator," said C, 54, a businesswoman.

Another, who decided to be anonymous, said: "Noynoy

AUDIENCE: A17

Candidates up close and personal behind the stage

By Volt Contreras and Alycia Gawthorne

IF THE DEVIL IS SAID TO BE IN THE DETAILS, then some of the backstage banter and body language heard and seen during the business 1st Edition presidential debate could really send some people praying: "Se help us, God."

Environmentalist Nicanor Perlas, one of the earliest arrivals, pointed out that while he was "reunited to up to 20" police or military bodyguards, he had not availed himself of any since there was "no threat to my life so far."

Hence, the ex-activist drove alone in his Honda Civic to the UP Theater in Diliman.

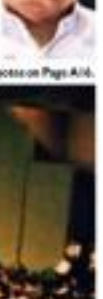
CANDIDATES: A15

Nick Perlas

"I will create, once president, a new Cabinet position on civil society affairs. For me this is important because we are going to introduce a new concept of governance that goes beyond just government."

Gibo Teodoro

"Why did it take 13 years to continue the Skyway? It's only now that it's being continued. This is one corruption that has to be addressed—the corruption of so long-term continuity of policies."



Eddie Villanueva

"Once they see a moral, righteous leadership, everyone will pay correct taxes because they know there will be no more corruption. And we can easily negotiate to restructure our foreign debts."

Manny Villar

"I am spending my own money. It is crucial to ask not only how much is being spent on ads, but who are giving these (candidates) funds. Because we might be electing these (donors) as president, not the one facing you (in the election)."

More quotes on Page A14

FULL HOUSE Business leaders, professionals, students and supporters of presidential candidates pack the UP Theater for the Inquirer's presidential debate. Some noted it was also a crowd of A-listers like those of Don Jaime Zobel de Ayala and Fernando Zobel. A total of 80 questions were fielded by the panelists, Inquirer readers and members of the audience during the forum that lasted for more than two hours.

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

6/42 LOTTO
1 29 25 19 19 9

6/49 LOTTO
5 4 4 5 0 3

4D LOTTO
4 3 5 9 0 4 7

MEGALOTTO 6/45
8 12 27 28 34 36
P10,731,288.40

NBI looks for Ping in China, Taiwan

By Artemio dela Cruz, Correspondent & Jaime Laude and Jeannette I. Andrade

INVESTIGATORS ARE CHECKING OUT LEADS that fugitive Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson may be in China or Taiwan.

Ricardo Diaz, deputy director of the National Bureau of Investigation, said agents were following leads the senator was in Taiwan, where he is said to have economic interests in high places, but "no real verification yielded negative results."

"We are looking at mainland China, not Taiwan. I cannot give you details but we are verifying our leads that the senator may be in mainland China," Diaz said.

"The senator, who is wanted in connection with the Dacer-Corbito double-murder case, flew in Hong Kong in early January then disappeared.

The Philippines has an extradition treaty with Hong Kong. But if Lacson has slipped to the mainland, "there's a need to enter into a separate extradition treaty with the Chinese government," Diaz said.

One source, a senior official at the NBI, however, indicated that Taiwan was still very much on investigators' minds.

"The most logical place for Lacson to go is to Taiwan because of ties he developed with officers of the Ministry of Justice and Investigation Bureau of Taiwan when he was head of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force on PAGCTF," said the source, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorized to speak on the case.

Archrival members of law enforcement agencies there may be helping him, not the agencies per se," the source explained.

"It's Taiwan, Ping is in Taiwan," he said.

At any rate, NBI Director Nestor Mantaring said yesterday he had opened communications there with Lacson's lawyers in a bid to convince the fugitive senator to give himself up.

He also disclosed that he was coordinating with the Philippine National Police to put a price on Lacson's head.

"If he [Lacson] is indeed innocent of the charges, he can clear his name by submitting to the authorities and defending himself," Mantaring said.

"We can send agents to the [country of Lacson. It will be better if they convince him to surrender," Mantaring added.

Until then, the search for Lacson would continue.

Mantaring revealed that the Interpol had made representations with the Hong Kong immigration office to provide them information on the point of entry and exit of Lacson. "That would be vital in tracking down the senator," he said.

Mantaring also said the agency was in the process of compiling documents to support their request to include Lacson in the Interpol's "red notice."

Inclusion in the red notice means the intelligence network of Interpol's 186 member countries would be mobilized to track down the senator.

Seeking asylum

Meanwhile, a political adviser and spokesperson of the embattled lawmaker said Lacson may attempt to seek asylum in another country by invoking a provision in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights.

"Under the UN Declaration on Human Rights, Lacson can seek asylum if he feels he will not get justice in his own country due to vindictiveness and political persecution ... or if he feels his life is in danger," Lito Banayo explained.

In an interview, Banayo said he had last recently spoken with Lacson but "based on conversations with the senator in December, "the possibility of seeking asylum in a foreign country was discussed."

Banayo said he would not be surprised if Lacson explored that option.

Banayo said he last spoke with Lacson on Dec. 19 and received a text message from him on Dec. 29.

The message, according to Banayo, had nothing to do with the Dacer-Corbito case he admits a warrant for Lacson's arrest was issued last week.

"His message was about his plans to call on his leaders and supporters nationwide to publicly announce his support for the candidacy for president and vice presidency of Gen. Benjamin "Kokoy" Aquino III and Sen. Mar Roxas.

"The ang balak niya talaga, para walang maisip na mga [who] [kaibigan] [ni] [Lacson] [na] [pulitika] [ang] [dahilan] [kaya] [siya] [nagtatago] [ay] [dahil] [sa] [pulitika] [ng] [administrasyon] [ni] [Pangulong] [Arroyo]. [Ang] [totoo] [niyan] [ay] [dahil] [sa] [takot] [niya] [sa] [sistema] [ng] [hustisya] [sa] [ilalim] [ng] [administrasy

Palparan 'assassin' among those arrested–AFP

By Marlon Ramos and Marissa Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

AN ASSASSIN ASSIGNED TO KILL RETIRED Army Brig. Gen. Jovito Palparan was among the 43 suspected communist rebels rounded up in a raid on a farmhouse in Morong, Rizal, over the weekend, the military claimed yesterday.

Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson, said Alyas Monico, who is member of the "special operations group" of the communist-led New People's Army formed in KR Philippines.

Palparan has been branded a "butcher" by leftist militants who claimed that numerous political killings were committed during his term as commander of the Army's 204th Infantry Brigade in Mindoro in 2005. Palparan is the nominee of the party-list group Bantay which is running in the May elections.

Brawner and colleague claimed those detained were both members and accused the police and military of framing the suspects.

Speaking with reporters in Camp Aguinaldo, Brawner said Monico was attending a training on manufacturing improvised bombs in the farmhouse owned by Dr. Melecio Mallari when he and the other suspect were arrested.

No information though

Asked if Monico was in the area to carry out the purported plot to kill Palparan, Brawner said, "We don't have any information about it."

Denying that the raid violated the rights of those arrested, Brawner said the operation conducted by the local police and the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade was covered by a court-issued warrant.

He insisted that all the arrested were NPA members, including some wanted under arrest warrants for illegal possession of firearms, murder, kidnapping and other criminal offenses.

In fact, he said, former NPA hostage Stephen Cornejo was able to identify among them arrested Rolando Galido and Aileen Monasterio as members of the rebel unit that held him hostage for several months in the province. Read four pp. after accordingly.

Brawner said all of those arrested—Jessa Tolentino, Lilibeth Montero, Clar Cruz, Joy Mangaoba, Cristine Anne Evangelista and Jason Mendoza—were NPA rebels operating on Mindoro island.

Raid on police station

Two others—Jennilyn Pisano and Dante Buenaventura—were NPA political officers who took part in the raid on a police station in San Narciso, Quezon, in December 2009, he added.

Brawner said three others—Yolanda Manaog, Primo Buenavista and Jaime Javier—were among nine former activists arrested in Silang, Cavite, in August 2008 for illegal possession of firearms.

"Some of those arrested already admitted that they were regular members of the NPA and that they were willing to be government witnesses," Brawner said.

Brawner said he welcomed the plea of the relatives of those arrested to file administrative and criminal charges against the soldiers and policemen who took part in the raid.

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Ballots finally printing

AFTER SEVERAL postponements, the printing of the official ballots for the May 10 elections was finally started yesterday afternoon at the National Printing Office (NPO) in Quezon City.

Elections Commissioner Gregorio Larrazabal said the 50,720,754 ballots were set to begin printing Sunday but this was again delayed because the machines had to be "recalibrated."

This was because the ballots for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) were 27 inches long due to the need to provide Arabic translations. The ballots for the rest of the country are 23 inches.

The printing was postponed several times. It was supposed to start on Jan. 22, but this was pushed back to Jan. 30, then Jan. 31, only to be reset to Feb. 7.

Larrazabal earlier said the printing would be completed by Mar. 31.

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Two in one: Ampatuan mulls hiring lawyer-MD

By Herb B. Madera
Reporter/Medical Intern

COTABATO CITY—DETAINED Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan visited the treatment Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is seriously considering replacing his lawyer, Sigfrid Fortun, with a lawyer who is also a doctor so he could be defended and treated at the same time.

Dr. Redzorodin Tejada of the Maguindanao Provincial Hospital (MPH) said Ampatuan was a diabetic and hypertensive and had sought medical treatment at the Makati Medical Center.

Tejada said he would regularly check Ampatuan's blood sugar and blood pressure, along with a consultant physician of the Criminal Investigation and Detention Group (CIDG) in Camp Crame where Ampatuan and three of his brothers are detained on rebellion charges.

Tejada said some persons, apart from health officials had wanted him that ministering to the Ampatuans might get him into trouble since General has no one "outside his [service] jurisdiction."

Dr. Tahir Salaik, MPH head, was confined at the Philippine Heart Center and could not attend to his former superiors, local health officials said.

A source in the Ampatuan camp, who was not authorized to speak to media, requested anonymity because he said Ampatuan might engage the services of lawyer-physician Sonny Dariño, who is based in Zamboanga.

Dariño, who is based in Zamboanga, could not be reached for comment.

Ampatuan, 56, is facing multiple charges for allegedly masterminding more than P300 million in ill-gotten wealth; he has maintained his innocence.

The retired general is detained at the Philippine National Police Custodial Center in Camp Crame, Quezon City while his wife and nine others are facing murder charges in connection with the Nov. 23 massacre of 57 people, including 30 media workers, in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao.

Ampatuan was arraigned on Jan. 4 before Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 77 and the proposed transfer of the Ampatuans to a regular jail, saying that they had not undergone preliminary investigation in the rebellion case.

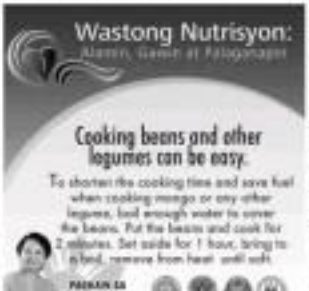
"This is like putting the cart ahead of the horse," Fortun had said.

Tejada and Ampatuan traveled to four weights and lowered his blood sugar level. He noted that Ampatuan would become pale under stress and said that his health should be closely monitored.

The Bonjuscan Tourism, a government agency in Makati Medical Center, said Ampatuan was diagnosed with diabetes, hypertension, a fatty liver and obesity on Jan. 7, 2007.

Meanwhile, government troops found 3 unearthed explosives in an abandoned house outside the mansion of detained former Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan Sr., the clan patriarch, in Shariff Aguak on Monday.

Senior Supt. Alex Linares, Maguindanao police director, said military intelligence reports led elements of the Army's 6th Infantry Division under Lt. Gen. Anthony Alcantara to uncover a cache of mostly mines and improvised explosives. With a report from Charlie C. Señas, Inquirer Mindanao



Accused general tries to gain freedom anew

FORMER MILITARY COMTROLLER Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia is continuing his quest for temporary freedom by appealing the "no-bail" ruling of the Sandiganbayan.

In a motion for reconsideration, Garcia argued that the antigraft court applied the petition for bail based on insufficient evidence.

"What is so stable is no less than a person's liberty, the very foundation of law, justice and fairness," Garcia said in his appeal. "In this light, accused most respectfully moves for reconsideration and for re-weighing of the evidence in favor of the grant of bail to the accused."

Garcia, his wife and three sons are facing plunder charges for allegedly amassing more than P303 million in ill-gotten wealth; he has maintained his innocence.

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Elena Kalaw-Lacson of Lipa dies at 67

ELENA "ELLEN" Kalaw-Lacson of Lipa City died on Feb. 7 at the age of 67.

She is survived by her husband, journalist Eduardo Lacson of Business Mirror; children Dr. Eduardo Lacson Jr. and Ben, Skyper and Cathy; Jerald and Aileen; grandchildren Roger, Edward, Jessica and Jessica; and siblings Teodora, Helena, Pedrito, Sonia, Servacio, Wilfredo and Marina.

Her remains lie at the San Sebastian Cathedral in Lipa City basement mill be at Ivarad Gardens in Lipa on Feb. 10 at for 9 a.m. Mass. Relatives and friends may get in touch with go at 3213918, and 0917-Marina R. Sueda- 1843) 7561487 8811857.

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3. Managing the Procurement Function	May 15, 22, 29, June 5
4. Logistics and Customer Service	July 17, 24, 31, Aug. 7
5. Distribution Management	June 19, 26, July 3
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BEHIND THE SCENE Inquirer columnist P. Joaquin Bernas SJ shares a light moment with Dick Gordon before the start of the presidential debate. At left is JC delos Reyes, presidential candidate and Gordon's employee. EDWARD

Front-runners differ on plans to fix huge budget deficit

By Dianne L. Lucas

THE TWO FRONTRUNNERS IN THE presidential race struck widely divergent views when detailing their plans for putting the government's books in order during yesterday's Philippine Daily Inquirer presidential debate.

Sen. Benigno Aquino III was asked how he would tackle the growing budget deficit given a statement he made earlier that he was opposed to the idea of taxing items should he be elected president.

"We should target a balanced budget this early," Aquino said, but at the same time pointing out that "pump-priming" would be needed over the next term due to the long list of people's needs that the state must address.

Aquino said he was opposed to the idea of raising taxes because tax collection could not effectively collect the taxes that were already mandated by law.

"It is not right to raise taxes [in a situation like this]," he said.

Aquino then revealed his stand against raising taxes during a speech before the Makati Business Club last month. His pronouncement met with enthusiastic support from the business community, but was criticized by Makati mayoralty hopeful Jejomar Binay.

Aquino's proposed stance later coincided by a fellow presidential aspirant, Sen. Richard Gordon, who said that while all candidates were in favor of a low tax regime, any promise by anyone to lower tax rates as touched at this point would merely be "pie-ping" (grandstanding).

Sen. Manuel Villar, Aquino's closest contender, dodged a question about who has top economic advisers would be of the next elected president, saying he was not ready to reveal their names this early.

Budget deficit

But Villar said that the main problem his administration would tackle was the budget deficit, which could balloon to ₱358 billion by next year.

"To be able to manage this deficit, we must be able to hit the ground running," he said.

He added that there were many aspects to the problem that should be tackled simultaneously.

Villar then argued later the aspects of the economy that he would emphasize, particularly infrastructure and agriculture.

"We should do the doubles, because the first year [of the new administration] will be very difficult because of the size of the deficit," he said, while making a pitch for improved collection efficiency.

Villar said he would focus on raising the efficiency rate of revenue agencies closer to levels achieved during the Ramos administration from 2002 to 2004.

Oligarchs

For his part, administration standard-bearer Gilbert Teodoro promised to promote greater competition in business as one way of further reducing the influence of oligarchs in the local economy.

"It is the only guarantee that your economy will not be controlled by a few with ruinous consequences," Teodoro said.

He made a pitch for "private incentive" as a means of lifting more Filipinos out of poverty, as opposed to simply redistributing wealth.

Dismantle cartels

The strongest statements about business and economic issues came from Sen. Jamby Madrigal when she was asked why business people should vote for her.

"I don't [think] the big businessmen would vote for us, especially those who own cartels and monopolies," she said. "Because I would really like to dismantle these cartels and monopolies."

"We will never progress as a country until we dismantle the oligarchies and that country," Madrigal said. "Ninety percent of the big businessmen are still Marcos people. And it's low not being done."

She said she would not court the vote of big businessmen. "I am not accepting contributions from big businessmen," she added.

You can deny us, *but you can't make us go away.*

For as long as the people seek truly free and fair elections, the light of NAMFREL shall burn brightly.

Last week, the COMELEC unanimously decided to deny NAMFREL, in partnership with the CBCP-NASSA, accreditation for the May 10, 2010 elections. This means that NAMFREL/CBCP-NASSA will not be entitled to its own copy of the election returns normally used for a parallel count, nor will it be able to officially observe the random manual precinct audit to validate the electronic results.

The May 10 elections will be the first automated polls in the country's history. But up to now, the capabilities of the new system have not been fully established. People are understandably nervous that many things could go wrong or that it would simply facilitate widespread cheating.

NAMFREL has watched over 25 national and local elections. More than 500,000 volunteers have given their time, energy, and even their lives, to preserve the sanctity of the ballot. NAMFREL has glories in its achievements, but it has also learned from its mistakes. NAMFREL is now a model for election monitoring in over 32 countries, and it has earned a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

To deny NAMFREL accreditation because two of its officials are allegedly "partisan" (with "partisanship" defined as being critical of the administration) is to insult the integrity and patriotism of its 500,000 volunteers—the youth, professionals, businessmen, religious, peasants, urban poor, labor—who come together during elections, set aside their personal preferences and unite in one goal: the conduct of free and fair elections.

Why doesn't the COMELEC welcome the services of an experienced organization whose vigilance helps validate the results of the elections?

Now, the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) has already been accredited. With the pervasive doubts lingering about a totally new untested system, isn't it to the advantage of COMELEC to have more than one watchdog, as it has done in the past? A watchdog that is ecumenical, trust-based and experienced in observing, monitoring and assisting in elections would help make this exercise much more credible.

NAMFREL volunteers know how important it is to be a real CITIZENS' watchdog, even if it means watching the COMELEC itself, if necessary. The COMELEC during the Marcos, Aquino, Ramos and Arroyo administrations all respected that role and accredited NAMFREL. The Melo COMELEC is the exception.

NAMFREL is bigger than any of the individuals that comprise it. It is bigger than the politics, excuses and officiousness of the powerful. Come the 2010 elections, the NAMFREL volunteers will reunite, and together with CBCP-NASSA and other electoral watchdogs, mobilize our countrymen to vigilance once more.

You cannot kill the NAMFREL spirit.

NAMFREL

"In my mind leaning out NAMFREL—which has gained expertise through the decades it worked since 1983 to ensure that elections are transparent and credible—will only work to the disadvantage of the COMELEC and the credibility of the elections in general."

Sec. Albert Funtes

"One of the pillars of a true democracy is clean and honest elections. Clean elections in turn depends on the vigilance of non-partisan groups who will ensure that votes are counted properly. Learning from past experiences and mistakes, NAMFREL overall has shown a renewed capacity to safeguard the votes of the Filipino people.

COMELEC should accredit NAMFREL as one of the official monitoring organizations for elections."

Ricardo Reyes

"NAMFREL must be accredited by the COMELEC in this new era of automated elections. It has earned its accreditation from the people."

Sen. Dick Gordon

"Considering its track record and expertise in previous elections, NAMFREL-NASSA-CBCP is well-qualified to discharge the duties of an accredited citizens' arm to conduct a nationwide unofficial count for dissemination to the public."

Gov. Raymond Signson

FRIENDLIER Inquirer publisher (from left) Fran Pacon, Michael Tee and Raul Jimenez-David during the Inquirer presidential debate. EDWARD

need a job?

Body of Pinay trapped in Haiti supermarket found

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE BODY OF A FILIPINO WOMAN WHO worked in a Haiti supermarket was found in the rubble of the store on Sunday, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said yesterday.

The remains of Mary Grace Fabian were pulled from a Jar supermarket in Port-au-Prince after 11 a.m. on Feb. 7 (11pm that night in Manila) almost one month after a magnitude-7.0 earthquake leveled Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas on Jan. 12, according to Lt. Col. Lope Ibarra, commander of the 10th Philippine Peacekeeping Contingent in Haiti.

Fabian's body was recovered by the Central National Equipment Services team assisted by members of the Philippine contingent headed by Cpl. Eric Dedoles and Senior Navy Officer 1 Carlo Dungoldin.

The remains were positively identified by Lionel Lalinan, husband of Geraldine Lalinan, another Filipina worker still trapped in the ruins of the supermarket.

Fabian was identified through her tattoos, hair and necklace. Her sister, Rosalyn Fabian, decided to immediately have the body at the National Cemetery in Wet on Friday.

The Philippine contingent in Haiti is providing security in the area of the Caribbean Supermarket and continuing recovery efforts for Lalinan under the supervision of Philippine Honorary Consul to Haiti Fitzgerald Isaiah.

On Friday morning, the DFA welcomed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport the 58th and last batch of 62 Filipinos repatriated from Haiti, among them, Lalinan's son Errol and Webbi. A total of 63 Filipinos have been repatriated from the devastated nation.

Nadine Dorrenne Modesto Welfare Ini- ministered the returnees then would receive assistance from the Initiative which DFA pays a membership fee of $125 upon departure.

Cheaper meds coming – DOH

A NEW ROUND OF DRUG PRICE REDUCtions would be announced soon, Health Secretary Esperanza Cabral said.

Cabral said the Department of Health (DOH) would release its third two weeks a list of "voluntary" price reductions made by pharmaceutical companies to avoid a government-ordered mandatory price cut.

Last August, Malacañang, upon the DOH's recommendation, imposed a maximum drug retail price (MDRP) equivalent to a 50-percent price reduction on five essential medicines.

Under pressure from the Palace, pharmaceutical companies agreed to cut by half the prices of 18 other essential medicines.

The Cheaper Medicines Law allows the government to impose the MDRP if market competition fails to bring down the cost of medicines.

"We are will continue the policy to bring down prices of medicines. We're preparing a new list of medicines whose prices will be reduced under the government-mediated access price (or voluntary price reductions)," said Cabral, who was appointed health secretary last month.

She said the new list covers about 20 molecules, or the basic drug ingredient, for medicines against anxiety and hypertension, and antibiotics among others.

Cabral said she preferred that pharmaceutical companies brought down prices on their own, rather than have another executive order.

"Ideally, I would like to make it mandatory because they're going to do it anyway," she said.

— Gaea Katreena Cabico

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, February 9, 2010
5th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30
Gospel: Mk 7:1-13

Once the disciples gathered around Jesus and with them were some readers of the law who had just come from Jerusalem.

They noticed that some of his disciples were eating their meal with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. Now the Pharisees, and in fact, all the Jews, never eat without washing their hands for they follow the tradition received from their ancestors. Nor do they eat anything when they come from the market unless they sprinkle themselves. ... So the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law asked him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders, but eat with unclean hands?"

Jesus answered, "You, shallow people! How well Isaiah prophesied of you when he wrote: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. The worship they offer me is worthless, for what they teach are only human rules.' You even put aside the commandment of God to hold fast to human tradition."

And Jesus continued, "You have a fine way of disregarding the commandment of God so as to implant your own tradition. For example, Moses said: Honor your duty to your father and your mother, and 'Whoever curses his father or his mother must be put to death.' But according to you, someone could say to his father or mother: 'I already declared Corban, which means "offered to God," what you would have expected from me.' In this case, you no longer let him do anything for a father or mother, by you nullify the word of God through the tradition you have handed on. And you do many other things like that."

Commentary:

"These people honor me with their mouths, but their heart is really far away from me. It is no use for them to worship me, because they teach human rules as though they were my laws!"

It is not simply of keeping the laws of an institution that was founded by Jesus Christ himself that matters. And good law, Jesus is clear, is what makes both himself find and love God neighbor plain for all to see.

CONGRATULATIONS CITY OF MANDALUYONG

65TH LIBERATION DAY AND 16TH CITYHOOD

BENHUR ABALOS

Mayor, City of Mandaluyong
President, League of Cities of the Phils.
President, Union of Local Authorities of the Phils.

42.25 BILLION WORTH OF INVESTMENTS

In spite of the global economic crisis, Mandaluyong City managed to increase its investments to P 42.25 billion at the end of 2009.

When the city was named "Most City Economy in the country" in 2003 by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Asian Institute of Management in ADV Policy Center, the recorded total investments was 13 billion which has more than tripled in 2009.

The outstanding investments record of the city comes from the 13 major corporate tenants and estate developers in the country.

Increase in Income

Since the administration of Mayor Benhur Abalos, the total income has increased by 395 million or 25.5% since 2000. In 2009 alone, the total income generated by the city is 1.9 billion, which is 13.29% or P222 million higher than 2008. This development is attributed to the steady rise in the number of new businesses particularly multinational companies in the city. The influx of investors in the city is proof to the effective leadership and sustainable business regulations system in the city.

In fact Mandaluyong has presented to the successful implementation of the Standard Business Registration Procedure that aims to speed up the business registration process and issuance of permits to a matter of 15 minutes.

With more business coming in, the city government is able to provide employment opportunities to its constituents. Through the various job fairs conducted in the city and the constant coordination with other government agencies and the private sector, a total of 23,050 city residents have been employed since 2007 up to last year.

Innovative Projects
Garden of Life Park Cemetery

As part of the blueprint project for the city, Mayor Benhur Abalos embarked on a creative approach over the construction and redevelopment of the Garden of Life Park (formerly Mandaluyong City Cemetery) in Barangay Vergara. It has encompassing facilities dubbed as "4C" - Cemetery, Columbarium, Crematorium and Chapel.

The many features of the Park are expected to be beneficial especially to the indigents who cannot to avail of the very affordable rates of services in the cemetery. The newly-inaugurated Crematorium being now for a local government made a public cemetery is also the first of its kind in the country and targeted to solve congestion related concerns.

Lingap Kawanagan Center

The newly-inaugurated Lingap Kawanagan Center in Welkendo Compound, Barangay Addition Hills serves as a learning institution for special but underprivileged children through the Project TEACH (Tertiary Education Assistance for Children with Handicap).

Another facility is the Silver Lingap located at Lyon Road, Barangka Ibaba that will cater to custodial dehospitation, providing protection and services in addition to conflict with the law.

Awards and Citations

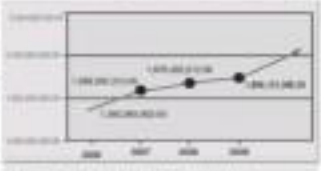
- Project TEACH bagged the 2008 Paul Harris Fellow Award for its innovative program given by the World Bank.
- 1st Runner-up Outstanding City in Nutrition Program in Management (NCBF) and Best in Rice Nutrition Program for year 2009 cited by the National Nutrition Council.
- Second Place in the 2009 Presidential Awards for the Most Child Friendly City to the NCR awarded by the Regional Committee for the Welfare of Children, (DSWD).
- No. 1 in terms of "Quality of Life" among the 80 but gold-earning cities in the country cited by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) "Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking Project."
- City with the Fastest Turnover in terms of Registering Property / Ranked no. 1 in terms of Registering Property among the 17 cities in the Philippines cited by World Bank / International Finance Corporation "Doing Business in the Philippines 2009" Report.

As the city of Mandaluyong celebrates this year its twin city celebration - 65th Liberation Day and 16th Cityhood Anniversary, the Mandaluyon, with a glorious and historic past to endure, have more reasons to celebrate the achievements of today and look at the future with optimism.

Formerly known as San Felipe Neri, Mandaluyong was separated from San Juan de Dios, Province of Pasig in 1841. By virtue of House Bill No. 3836, Mandaluyong became a municipality on March 22, 1907.

On February 9, 1945, the municipality was razed by the American forces from further damages of the World War II. Then the became a red calendar day for Mandaluyong marking its liberation from the Japanese Imperial forces by the Americans.

On February 8, 1994, Mandaluyong became a fully-fledged city by virtue of RA 7854.



INVESTMENTS
13 MAJOR INVESTORS IN THE CITY

13 MAJOR INVESTORS IN THE CITY

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

LAND FOR THE LANDLESS HOME FOR THE HOMELESS PROGRAM

PURCHASED PROPERTY	AREA	NO. OF BENEFICIARIES
Lewerio Property	200 sq.m.	24
L & R Property	670 sq.m.	24
Montevirgen Property	700 sq.m.	48
Leyco Property	77 sq.m.	Right of way
Reomero Property	239 sq.m.	12
Robert Gr. Su-Hua Property	3,900 sq.m.	Narcisan Park
Amparo Cardeo	360 sq.m.	6
Arturo Dela Cruz	3,105 sq.m.	77
Metropolitan	1,489 sq.m.	36
Tee Lim / Inc Mendoza	180 sq.m.	9
Famosa Property	474 sq.m.	28
Librada Moran / Dina Francisco	1,004 sq.m.	42
Ibañonco Ong	2,000 sq.m.	No awardees
M. Vasquez / Calangon Property	4,320 sq.m.	55
George Cobeo Property	738 sq.m.	For proposed staff
Josefina Fernandez	375 sq.m.	36
Phoenix Property	5,420 sq.m.	117
TOTAL		**509 FAMILIES**

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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Burgonia

8 kidnap suspects killed in Quezon

By Dolly T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

CANDELARIA, QUEZON—EIGHT SUSPECTED kidnappers were killed in a reported shoot-out with policemen at a mobile checkpoint in front of the police's 415th Mobile Group headquarters along the Maharlika Highway in Sitio Tagnan, Barangay Bukal Sur, here early Monday.

Chief Supt. Bino Franda said the armed men were on barong, provincial police chief, found a Toyota Hi-Ace van that rammed a wooden barricade of the Commission on Elections at around 5:30 a.m. and fired at the lawmen manning the checkpoint.

The policemen returned fire, killing seven of the men on the spot. Two of the fatalities lay on the pavement with guns on their sides, while the rest were found inside the bullet-ridden vehicle, Franda said.

One of the gunmen was rushed to the hospital but was declared dead on arrival, he added.

Four of those killed were identified from the contents of their wallets as Jojo Dalanon, payroll guard from UMA security agency and resident of Quezon City and Bulacan; Roger Dacuno Dulloc of Rizal; Wilbert Mauricio of Las Piñas City; and Samuel Renatco of Quezon City.

Supt. Ronald Wanantan, head of the Quezon Police Intelligence Management, said he was supervising eight police officers and Army soldiers at the checkpoint when the Toyota van suddenly hit the barricade and its passengers started firing.

"We flocked for cover and returned fire to defend our selves," he told the Inquirer.

Police recovered a .45 cal. pistol with five bullets, a .357 cal. revolver with 17 bullets, a grenade, a Carbine rifle with two magazines loaded with 40 bullets, two magazines for .45 cal. gun loaded with bullets and a jungle bolo.

Residents said the gunfire lasted about 10 minutes.

Police also found 16 unidentified bank checks in one of the armed men's bags, a pair of fake vehicle license plates and several mobile phones inside the vehicle. One of the checks, worth P328,000, was payable to Sky Philippines Corp.

"We believe that the group was an organized KFR (kidnap for ransom) and robbery group and was about to make one and eventually hit their targets, probably prosecutors and other business establishments in Quezon, and also kidnap moneyed personalities for ransom," Ilarmo said.

After reporting the shoot-out, Rosello Dagos, the MMC crew specialist in Quezon, received a mobile phone call from one engineer Romeo del Mundo, who introduced himself as an official of VSI, which is engaged in quarrying operations in Perez town in Dinalupigo.

Del Mundo told the radioman that the check was one of the items stolen from the former company's president on Feb. 4.

According to Mercantes, the van's license plate was stolen from a Toyota Hi-Lux registered to one Redrosse Gamanos on Jan. 25, 2007.

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6 NPA guerrillas killed in Davao Oriental clash

TAGUM CITY—SIX NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA) rebels were killed in an encounter between government troops in a hinterland village in Lupon, Davao Oriental, on Saturday.

The military revised its figure of rebel fatalities on Monday following the discovery of five more bodies after the clash in Barangay New Visayas.

Army Maj. Gen. Carlito Halagueña, 10th Infantry Division chief, said soldiers recovered the body of a suspected rebel's while four others were reported to be retrieved from the encounter site.

"We have confirmed four dead NPAs while two others are soldiers for verification," said Lt. Col. Ferdinand Buderig, commander of the Army's 20th Infantry Battalion.

The announcement was made during a visit of Army chief Lt. Gen. Delfin Bangit here on Monday.

Buderig's men were checking reports about the presence of armed men in the village when the fighting broke out at 7 a.m. on Saturday. Capt. Emmanuel Garcia, 10th ID public affairs officer, said.

Buderig identified four of the slain rebels as Anthony Cabeyan, alias Jimjim; Leonilo Sandoval, alias Michael; Romeo Sanchez; and a certain Ba-an, a female, all of the province's second district.

Troops also recovered one M-16 rifles, a 12-gauge shotgun and explosives.

Equipment burning

In Madrid, NPA rebels bombed and burned two heavy equipment at a construction site in Barangay Bongbong in Bukid town at about 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, police said.

Supt. Victor Boos, police provincial spokesperson, said the rebels attacked a road construction site, bombing and setting on fire a backhoe and a pay loader.

Boos said the attack was mainly prompted by the failure of the construction firm to give in to the extortion demands of the rebels.

Quoting reports, Boos said the heavy equipment were owned by Gego Canseleng, who has an ongoing road concreting project in the area.

A joint military and police patrol team, while on a clearing operation at the construction site, recovered a homemade bomb planted in the road, Boos said.

Ambush

On Sunday afternoon, two policemen were wounded in an ambush by NPA members in Barangay Bulfog in Iron town in Bauhan, an Army report said on Monday.

Members of the Philippine National Police Mobile Group Davao were traversing the national highway at about 1:45 p.m. when an improvised explosive device was fooled at their patrol car, said Maj. Harold Cabunoc, public information officer of the Army's 9th Infantry Division based in Camp Siongco, Sergeant in Pili, Camarines Sur.

The explosion, Cabunoc added, wounded PO1 Romeo Rodriguez in the left leg, and PO1 Michael Sacro in the eyebrow. PNP personnel were declared in stable condition after being treated in the hospital.

Earlier, the Commission on Elections had listed Bauhan as a "hot spot" due to its history of political violence. Primarily Lite, Inquirer Mindanao; Jonas Cabrera Soller and Mac Arguelles, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Cops nab 2 gun ban violators at checkpoint

NAGA CITY—TWO FIREARMS yielded two .45 cal. pistols and bullets at a police checkpoint on Sunday night in Barangay San Roque, Sorsogon, Comelec said.

The Commission on Elections is enforcing a gun ban in preparation for the May elections.

Supt. Dionisio Bermudo, provincial police director, said Gilbert Oana, 36, a retired policeman, and Modesto Sioco, 39, were caught with guns when their van was flagged down at around 7:45 p.m.

One of the guns was found to Oana's possession while the other was found in the vehicle.

Bermudo said this was the sixth arrest made in the province since the gun ban was imposed.

He said Oana and Sioco were accompanied by several women when they were searched by policemen headed by Insp. Rhodrick Campo.

The two are detained at the Naboa Municipal Police office while facing charges of illegal possession of firearms never being prepared against them.

Supt. Elmer Beso, Sited police spokesperson, said the latest arrests brought to 46 those held in Sited for violation of the Comelec ban.

Beso said police checkpoints had so far seized 23 assorted hand guns and 14 high-powered firearms since Jan. 10.

He said Madrasy topped the list of armed people with 21. Jonas Escandor Jr. and Mac Arguelles, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Sumilao farmers push distribution of 94 hectares

By Jil N. Dyrela
Inquirer Mindanao

SUMILAO, BUKIDNON—MORE than two years after their historic march for land and justice to Malacañang, the Sumilao farmers are again restless over the delay in the awarding of 94 hectares of land under a memorandum of agreement (MOA) forged with the government and San Miguel Foods Inc. (SMFI).

The MOA mandated the immediate distribution of the 144 hectares, but with just 50 now set to lose from SMFI and the DAR (Department of Agrarian Reform) on the status of the remaining 94 ha," said Ferdie Morales, chair of the Peasant Families Multipurpose Cooperative (Pesama-Sumilao-SMFC).

About 180 farmers have set up camp outside the SMFI compound to press for their demand. Morales said the police would be held definitively until representatives of the beverage giant and the DAR come to the complete implementation of the MOA.

The MOA awarded a total of 144 ha to the farmers with SMFI agreeing to distribute to them 50 ha of the controversial Soriano Quezon-owned property in land bought. SMFI agreed to acquire to ensure the transfer of 94 ha of prime agricultural land within families in the farmers.

SMFI had acquired the 144-ha property from 30 landowners represented by Quezon Agricultural Development Corp. in February 2002 to establish a P2.4 billion agro-industrial complex consisting of a hog farm, waste-to-energy facilities, waste reservoir, biocontrol, a buffalo farm and post-harvest facilities.

Before the SMFI purchase of the estate, however, certificates of land ownership awards (CLOAs) were issued to 127 agrarian reform beneficiaries, which the DAR subsequently canceled following a conversion order by the Office of the President reclassifying the estate from agricultural to agro-industrial in 1996.

Morales said a copy of the farmers' petition had already been forwarded to Ramon L. Ang, president of SMFI, and Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser C. Pangandaman.

The DAR, in a meeting with the farmers on Nov. 24 last year, promised to expedite the distribution of the 94 ha and to identify distributee 11 more ha which the farmers' organizations—the Peasant Families MPC and the San Vicente Landless Farmers Association—submit a request to the agency through a formal resolution for the installation and distribution of CLOAs.

The farmers, however, insist that the 2008 MOA mandates for the immediate distribution of the 94 ha.

Sakbayan members march toward the gates of San Miguel Foods Inc. in San Vicente, Sumilao, to demand the distribution of the remaining 94 hectares of land which the company has vowed for agro-industrial activities.

Italian gov't gives houses to Iloilo typhoon victims

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

LAMBUNAO, ILOILO—"THIS is your life, your hope for us."

This was how Judith Lorenzo felt on Friday as she received the key to a brand new house that will be her family's new home in Barangay Pandan in this town, about 35 kilometers north of Iloilo City.

At 31, Lorenzo recalled how she lost her 14-year-old daughter more than a year ago when rampaging flood waters brought by Typhoon "Frank" swept their house on June 21, 2009.

Her husband was among the 216 drowned in 20 barangays mostly along the riverbanks.

The housing project, funded by the Italian government through the Italian Cooperation Agency, was turned over to the beneficiaries in ceremonies conducted by Mayor Bejoice Gonzales, the beneficiaries and the representatives of the Italian agency.

The housing project, composed of 78 concrete housing units, each measuring 25 square meters with two bedrooms and a toilet, stands on a 7-hectare site provided by the local government, while the labor component was handled by Bello Sup Architects Inc.

Sergio Quadrivecchi, project manager of Italian Cooperation agency, said they have donated 186 housing units including 50 in Antique town and 60 in Iloilo City. Last year, the Italian government also donated 300 houses to victims of Typhoon "Ruming" in Albay.

The beneficiaries in Lambunao were mostly poor settlers living riverbanks and earned a living as farmers.

Their new site was greeted fine old. dren on family by satisfied, Jackelyn Aguirre, 32, told the Inquirer.

Aguirre has three children aged 7-12 and her husband works as a farmer and carpenter in their new residence where they previously lived.

Mayor Gonzales said the local government would provide livelihood centers in the housing project to help the families who have relocated to their new, safer homes.

Chinoy running for councilor shot dead

CUYAPO CITY—A CHINESE-Filipino businessman running in the city council was shot dead by still unidentified assassins in his home here on Monday, police said.

Two of his minor children were wounded.

Senior Insp. Willy Ramos, city police mobile group director, identified the victim as Joseph Bruno Dalmacio, 42, of Barangay Bantay Heights 10.

Ramos said, who belonged to the party of barangay candidate Bal Tzay Dalangdang, wife of Magsaysaysan Brgy. Dalupan Ilangdon, was about to leave his home with his two children when two men shot him with .45-cal. pistols.

Chase

Police said the assailants chased Ilangdon to TV Ailonso Avenue and Lt. Sebastian Street. The assailants traded shots with the attackers, police said.

Ramos, quoting witnesses, said one of the attackers, who were riding on a motorcycle, was wounded.

Ilangdon's wife driving his pick-up van where he was shot is spared 7 a.m.

Police found the van at the street corner where Ilangdon fell.

Two handguns were recovered inside the vehicle, Ramos said.

He said no one could say whether the incident was election-related.

The city is under a state of emergency following last year's massacre of 57 people in Ampatuan town in Maguindanao.

—Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

'Bro,' 'Santino' give Bacolor hope, economic lift

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

BACOLOR, PAMPANGA—RESIdents here vastly missed television's comedy boy Bandit, his private-good life in the sobering Mayor Enrique and, especially, Bro.

Bro. Eliza, Bacolor chieftain and the ABS-CBN show on his "Bby Bakas Po," which was shot almost entirely in this town, stopped by Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions in 1991, are still admired here with "lots of deep gold bulls," said Fr. Jesse Almodiel, Bacolor parish priest.

"May Bakas Po" revolved around families, a boy abandoned by his mother and raised by priests in a monastery in this town of Bagong Pagasa (New Hope), marriage between a nun and Christ, schools he still flies, led him to inspire such things the lives of people in his town.

The production, which ran for seven and a half years and is now in late episodes on Friday but soon ends, also filled the town with huge, he said.

Almodiel said the show sort of in the town in Jul. 13, 2009.

Choice of location

He said the producers from chose Bacolor as the site of the beloved town Bagong Pagasan for a variety of reasons.

The architecture of the church of San Guillermo de Welfaro for this and with the signs of destruction left by Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions and lahar onslaught in 1995 and Bacolor's culture as the business capital of the Philippines might have influenced the production team to this place, he said.

When the team visited on Dec. 15, 2008, he said the church had undergone major repairs.

"The ruins were maximized. I

The 114-year-old church of St. William the Hermit in Bacolor, Pampanga.

have to consider the heritage value of the structure to make it an appropriate place for the town's showcase," said Almodiel.

Bacolor gained more attention when it was featured on the ABS-CBN morning show "Umagang Kay Ganda."

Before that, the Bacolor mayor's post-shooting-gone-bad-and-made-it-to-the-news-because-it-was the only structure that survived the lahar onslaught in 1995.

Almodiel agreed to make the church the location of the television's morning concert and hosted the show's cast and crew.

The production staff agreed to comply with the church's guidelines on the use of the compound.

"The most important question was, 'What will be the face of Bacolor?' Once time, it featured to be the Dejado of the church," he added.

The residents' doors are usually the church's doors before its late-declared hall's of the 300-year-old church.

Almodiel said the Parish Pastoral Council managed to get cooperation for every taping.

The production crew pays the locals for previous concessions, he said.

Several families, like the Bautistas, rented out their homes, said Mayor Enrico Dungca.

The mayor said a commercial which was used as a key movie was caused by the role played by Arlene Muhlach and Ogie Alcasid was able to buy the lot through the rent used to date, said former Board Member Nilo Cabalfin, a native of Bacolor.

The star of other noon hall-ins, reunion, however, was not free, said Dungca.

"The local government did not charge a centavo. It was one way of thanking Mr. Cruz [name for doing a wonderful thing for generation the town," he said, referring to the help provided by the ABS-CBN Foundation.

Cabalfin, whose home is across the church, said most tourists, localized foreign, dropped in the town to see the shooting as to mid church services.

Students made field trips to Bacolor during taping dates. Do those days, the church would have 500 to 600 visitors, he said.

The parish-run souvenir shop made good sales as mementos, said Mendoza.

He earns more than 6 times those days but wishes it, about 10 of them, said Bacolor defense. He "he'll do, just only" and "serious."

"We are not big enough to buy food for the day," said Mayor Jo Anne of her title. The production also hired a caterer in the town.

Some village residents are covered allowances for helping as extras and I-talk vendors, said Cabalfin.

"Just the main threats for propcides," Mendoza said.

Among the main sound directors was the spot on the left side of the altar. That's the coordinating place of Bro. Eliza, Almodiel, Arlene Emma Jacinto, and Jim, the Iron Christ character.

"We've got positive and negative scenes but it is happy, since that dominated the theme," said Mendoza.

Impact

Mendoza said "May Bukas Pa" also gave Bacolor and its people "pro-belonged in town."

"The town is aware of Bacolor on Ongoing Pagasa. It gave the people a sense of belonging. Bacolor also gives attention recommendations of The Tribune Channel. The show is an affirmation that Bacolor has risen," Mendoza said.

For Mendoza, the television gave viewers a limited to reflect on their lives.

Here and there, the various sought him for guidance on issues of faith.

Dungca said "May Bukas Pa" was a "welcome boost" for Bacolor, especially when trouble away by the disorders.

"They felt that Bacolor has been ousted from doing. It is returning to life," Dungca said.

Pampanga recount: Result on Feb. 11

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Commission on Elections' second division has set for Feb. 11 the promulgation of its decision on the 2007 recount conducted by former provincial Board Member Lilia Pineda against Gov. Eddie Panlilio.

Lawyers George Irene Garcia and Lian Buliliaren, counsels for Pineda and Panlilio, respectively, confirmed in separate telephone interviews on Monday that they had received a notice of promulgation from the division.

The parties were told to appear before the division at 2 p.m. on Thursday. It was learned.

The decision will wrap up a case where Panlilio managed to oppose until July 2009, when the Supreme Court ordered the division to proceed with the recount.

Panlilio, a Catholic priest, beat Pineda by 3,147 votes, but Pineda, who filed Panlilio's daughter votes, said fake ballots and has asked votes.

She also said members who sat in the board of elections inspectors did not count votes written with "Bunny Boby" for endorsement.

Panelo begged off from a phone interview on Monday, saying she had to see a doctor for her high blood pressure.

Expectation

While Garcia said he had no idea when the division would issue Buliliaren said he expected an advance resolution.

"Among 84 is going to lose. The second division is composed of two new members and the recount cases against [Bulacan Gov. Joseph] Clemdoro and [Imbalo Gov. Grace] Padaca," Buliliaren said.

Padaca and Panlilio are members of the Liberal Party (LP), while Mendoza's local political party is affiliated with the LP.

The Comelec, however, has not authorized the motions of former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan and former Iriberto Gov. Benjamin Di to intervene in the case.

Panlilio said he was ready for any decision. "We've been waiting for this. We shall wait patiently," he said, noting that he and his supporters did not cheat.

The civil society group Bayanig, which has stood by Panlilio, is mounting a prayer vigil on Thursday night at the provincial capital yard.

—Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Gonzales won't charge military officers linked to massacre

DAVAO CITY—Justice Secretary Raffy Gonzales on Friday rejected calls to charge military officers linked to the Nov. 23 massacre in Ampatuan, in which 57 people, mostly journalists, were killed.

"I am not prepared to sacrifice the careers of our officers," Gonzales said during a visit here.

Earlier, the families and relatives of the victims asked the Department of Justice to indict Maj. Gen. Alfredo Cuzon, former 6th Infantry Division commander, and two Army officers—commander Col. Medardo Gutierrez and Capt. Leonardo Nuevo—in the charge sheet.

The victims' families said Cuzon and Gerilla did not move previously the convoy and night even have a headquarters of a battalion was led by Datu Unsay Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr. allegedly carried out the massacre.

"I cannot allow that. I understand their pain, I go to them, I help but it is not good to sacrifice the career of people, who have got done anything wrong," Gonzales said.

He admitted that some members already asked him to threaten Cuzon and Gerilla from service but he said more allegations would not make him sacrifice their careers.

"I would like to see the witness and indeed the truth because is the end, even the victims will realize that by the stability of our country, the truth will be upheld. We should not cave in just because our emotions wanted us to cave in," he said.

Gonzales said "a lot" of military investigations had already been conducted on the Maguindanao massacre.

While saying that "there are cracks," he would not make it public though.

Nestor Tiu-Sy, wife of slain Presidente publisher Joel Pesayo, said she would rather wait for the decision of the court than believe Gonzales' statements on the innocence of Cuzon and Gerilla.

Antonio Trillanes IV, senator-elect, also called Gonzales' statements "disappointing."

"It was an internal probe done cleared claims to the docket to open to suspicion," he said. "The very basis the officers were negligent, at worst, to collusion (with the Ampatuans)," Espina said.

He said Gonzales' statement "betrayed suspicions the government may be attempting a whitewash in the case." Trillanes said in allowing the accused officers that made the massacre possible."—Julie Alipala and Richel Umel, Inquirer Mindanao

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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OPINION

Stranded

CONGRESS ADJOURNED LAST WEEK, BYPASSING more than a dozen important measures and executive reports. The Senate adjourned without doing anything on its last session day for lack of quorum. The House of Representatives adjourned also without acting on pending measures for lack of time and quorum.

Ostensibly, the minority boycotted the last sessions day of the Senate to protest the consideration of a resolution which would conserve Sen. Manuel Villar, Nationalista Party presidential candidate, on the C-5 road controversy. Sen. Miriam Defensor said she joined the minority bravos to block alleged attempts to pass two controversial bills. One seeks to reorganize the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. and give its board chair security of tenure. It would have the effect of preventing the new president from appointing a new Pagcor head. The other measure would reorganize the National Telecommunications Commission. Defensor said the NTC bill would have far-reaching consequences because the agency has control over the importation of signal jammers that could disrupt the operation of cell phone/radio interference, cell phones, radios and other telecommunication devices and tools.

Two committee reports that were bypassed were the Senate committee of the whole's report on the C-5 road controversy and the Senate blue ribbon committee's report on the controversial $329-million NBN-ZTE deal which says President Macapagal-Arroyo is "unreviewable" for the "winning" deal.

Other measures bypassed were the proposed Freedom of Information Act, Reproductive Health Bill, a New Central Bank Act, LPG Regulation, and Anti-Jueteng Act, Cybercrime Prevention Act, Early Voting Bill, Proposed Philippine Tax Academy and an Act Defining and Penalizing the Crime of Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance and the Right of Reply Bill.

It is unfortunate that the Freedom of Information Act was not passed because the final committee vote the product of months of hearings, deliberations and debates in the Senate and House and in the bicameral conference committee. It would have given flesh to the spirit of the constitutional provision that says that the people have the right of access to information on "subject to such limitations as may be defined by law." If the measure is not passed before the 14th Congress finally adjourns in June, it will have to be re-filed and will have to go again through the congressional mill. But it is good that the Right of Reply Bill which would have restricted freedom of the press was not passed.

The bypassed Reproductive Health Bill would have allowed the promotion of both natural and artificial birth control methods in government health centers. It is a very controversial measure, and apparently many legislators did not want to touch it because they did not want to antagonize the Catholic Church at a time when they are running for reelection.

The Central Bank bill, the Cybercrime bill, the LPG industry regulation bill, the early voting bill, the proposed Philippine Tax Academy and the bill on the crime of involuntary disappearance are all well-intentioned measures. But they were not passed largely because of lack of quorum in both the Senate and the House, and the lack of quorum was caused principally by partisan maneuverings.

The Senate and the House may yet have an opportunity to redeem themselves and pass the beneficial and noncontroversial measures during the session from May 21 to June 4 when the canvassing of the presidential election returns starts.

The majority and opposition groups in the Senate could come to a gentlemen's agreement that they will not consider the resolutions on the C-5 road controversy until the last one day or two days of the session, after they shall have acted on the important pending measures. The leadership of the House, for their part, could try their best to muster a quorum so that the chamber could pass pending measures and ratify some bicameral committee reports.

Members of Congress are elected by their constituents to pass laws, not to get embroiled forever in partisan wrangling and maneuvers. It's time they really earned the millions that the suffering taxpayers are paying them in salaries, allowances, pork barrel and other perks. It's time they did some real work and passed the pending important measures.

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Cobbling signboards

"WHAT WOULD THE TEN COMMANDMENTS have looked like if Moses had run them through ... Congress?" the late President Ronald Reagan once wondered. "Wonder no more. Listen instead to Rep. Henk Cojuangco.

"We're only good at changing the names of streets and schools. There are often the House proudly claims as its accomplishments," the Pangasinan representative noted. Congress subsumed "obligations. "Unsolicited bills are left rotting. ... Shouldn't we ... finally rest and devote ourselves?

Cojuangco understatement for colleagues' capacity—or appetite. They do love more skill than just cobbling new signboards for streets, schools, even 16-hideout city halls. They are no slouch at banning taxpayers' money. They appropriated for themselves last year P76-million pork barrel cities each. And they will have more this election cum-cal. Watch where the printed Gross and Appropriations act surface.

Congressmen embedded P1.14 billion in "state loans" in the Department of Public Works and Highways' budget last year. Another P1.8 billion was stashed in the Department of Transportation and Communications' budget. Both respective rejected plumbs.

Led by the President and Pres Gutierrez, 20 such fluff-congressmen robbed into Mrs Gil's la Cinque Restaurant and Bobby "that's Bonifacio" Rene has been told to accept, despite Speaker Prospero Nograles' Aug. 23 pledge that each of them would have to front the bill personally.

Congress has demonstrated its mettle in "Lumpia Diplomacy." Remember the Wise Illinois packet into a major camel that collided in rigging link to a $130-million telecom redevelopment? After a four-year probe, the Valuit Rural Electrified service fame, among those three Filipino companies: EC En Lumo Construction Corp., CMI Bros Electric and Mr. Lumo Candle Maid Corporation.

In less than a week's time, the House committee on public works and highways "cleared" the Bicol. Either the House probers were wiser

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

with—or rocks. This even pick.

"Lumpiahouse" partisans emerged in scams like Northrail, Joc Joc's fertilizer, the Macapagal Boulevard construction, etc.

"I could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native ... climate that exempt Congress," Rhett Evans wrote in 1887.

The House proved adept at doubling reams of comprehensive bills, whether lodged against the fraudster or her allies, like Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez.

Another bank, pro-Joseph Estrada congressmen sprang Lumpiahouse Tanggapin over to the Commission on Elections. On a budget of P1.2 billion, she awarded a $1.3-billion contract to election IDs. This winter registration project dismembered thousands. Sec. Juan Ponce Enrile's Zumwalt and pro-Erap congressmen dismantled themselves beneath several votes.

Presidential candidate Gilbert "Gibo" Teodoro moves rather to bar quarter-banking of Eduardo Cojuangco's "Bear Bryk" in saying to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

The Davide Court ruled that electoral frauds serve public funds, not corporate loot. The Court slapped Federated Marvin Bank's many banks. Dragged resistance by shakers and church groups stopped the "Deck." But not before Gibo and Co. dragged the country to the brink of economic ruin.

Reinforcement measures, however, was removed only by Congress. He like Sen. Lorenzo Tañada observed. But "every emperors have some-one-mind- senators," noted Thucydides. (THGMBA, 10:20:95) "And in Shivery's history, Mercedita Gutierrez was the First Gentleman's Gentlemen."

A seven-member Ombudsman squabbled, or Twain, key votes, depending on Pollux' votes. Philippine Human Development Report 2000 voices. Those reaped from the Mega Pacific election computer seen to the World Bank crackdown on highway bids collusion. In November, just as ex-pro congressmen spiked an impeachment charge against Corpuzone.

Corpuzone's term ends on 2011. She will be handed a slew of accusations when constitutional immunity for President Arroyo (and deficit) instantly for the First Gentleman) ends at noon of June 30, 2010. Or will she still be the earthen house then?

"There's talk that Palace wants to replace Ombudsman Gutierrez," Newsbreak's Aries Rufo reports. That way, "the new appointee would have a full term of seven years."

In that how long the regime foresees the word "forever in Bindu" ("what's best by now is that 'the Constitution prevents silence, divides and compromises," as Phil Rappler once joked.

The term-hope the 14th Congress left is potent. The President of Information Bill, for example, was "one step away from signature but the House of Representatives didn't deliver," ABS-CBN's Carmela Fonbuena reports. The bill's author Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III was pessimistic about the House ordering the report without Congress convene to the Bishops of Bench of Canonizers after the May elections.

The House's confidence could have tolerance since, in its words, if Davey was also objection, the Rose leader would have merely flipped it so, "But the House membership failed," Tañada said. "The session was marred, only adjourned because of lack of quorum."

Democracy will endure until the day Congress dissolves it can bribe the public with the public's money." Abuso de Inoperable never this last day count."

(Email juanlmercado@gmail.com)

Trust

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER WHEN NOMAN ALQUIN FIRST got his 100-96 ratings. His supporters were nursing every week, asking themselves how their night consolation he had. I said this was all very well, but surely before you asked yourself how to consolidate the land, you first had to win the get it?

That seems obvious. Be the election to allow the hardest thing to see, which is why the best place to hide things is in the open. In fact that was the one question the Aquino campaign failed to ask. Either the land was assumed to be theirs, or it was attributed to some vague easy to the "Cory magic."

Of course, it had to do with the Cory magic. But I don't know that people really looked at it. At most closely at what the Cory magic was, or how it worked.

How can anybody possibly assume Noynoy's lead is gone? How can anybody possibly not want to know how he got it at all? It's the most astonishing thing to be world. It didn't just do it by odds, it defied reason. If you cannot understand how it happened, how can you hope to consolidate it?

I turned Thought, and wrote, at least how that as a result of the remembered spirit of Joseph Estrada, Noynoy would eventually wake the land. The operative word was "eventually." I figured he would start out below, or maybe somewhere in the middle, and work his way up. The fact that he not only zoomed to the top but left everybody trying his dust seemed boggling.

You have to wonder again at the responsibility of it. Until August last year, Noynoy wasn't even a blip in the presidential radar. Though bright and personable, he had never made it a point to stand out in the media. Though he was not aloof, he had never made it a point to proclaim his views. Though born of parents who were open to history, he had never made it a point to let linger those life. Then overnight, poof, before he said he would run, he got carriage that seemed to last.

And you're going to ask how to consolidate that without first asking how he got it?

That alone would have shown, sure, that his numbers had to do with something bigger, vaster, grander than him. It would have shown that he was not a "paradoxicality," he was a symbol. It would have shown that he personally had not become larger than life, he had come to represent something that was larger than life.

If so, then logic would dictate that you situate a campaign that highlighted such fact. That dwelled on the legacy he represented rather than the virtues he possessed. That emphasized his identity, however it required humility of heroic proportions, to the cause his family fought for and died for. That made real his cause for being, and for becoming president, than he was his funicular of that legacy and representative of its prospects.

The campaign did not. I don't know how much that was the effect of the lead (it was a least) or being challenged to "be your own man," that even enough the campaign was dwelling instead on what Noynoy personally would do for the country, or for housing, for the poor. It's one thing to have your wings clipped. It's another to agree to it gleefully.

Just to recall for members those would have shown Force that Noynoy was not history decisions and he was an ordinary candidate. Ordinary elections do not have to announce, built on fear of the election-level the people to make. Those numbers would have shown, as I kept saying then, that the public was not seeing the other candidates, and it would seeing them simply because it was not seeing this to an election. The was not a choice between presidential holders, this was a choice between life or death. This was not a choice between Noynoy and Villar, this was a choice between Noynoy and GMA.

If so, then logic would dictate that you do everything in your power to not turn this into just another election, into just another choice between candidates, into just another plating contest between platforms, programs and promises.

The campaign did not. Which could only have been the product of bad advisers, of people devoid of insight. The campaign dwelled on Noynoy's platforms, programs and promises, albeit failing to show they were superior to the others. Thereby turning him into just another presidential candidate. Thereby making him another contestant visible as though a spotlight had suddenly been trained on them. Thereby allowing Villar to come leaning across in a space he knows so well, in a game whose rules he contributed, break, or buy.

Challenged to keep the campaign high, the campaign responded by making it low. Challenged to make the campaign lofty, the campaign responded by making it earthy.

But like I said yesterday, it's not the end of the line, it's just the beginning of things. It's just a question of going back to basics, of knowing where you came from so that you can get to where you're going.

It's just a question of the Aquino campaign seeing not with the arrogance of old triumphs but with the humility of new challenges. Because this is not a battle to seize the presidency, this is a struggle to liberate the country. It's just a question of the Aquino campaign realizing not with the fear of a lover losing its bet with the odds of a lover inflamed that this is not a battle to reverse the tides of history, it is a war to change the road life out of the Filipino from the hell that is to the heaven it can be. It's just a question of the Aquino campaign rediscovering not with the eyes of the enlightened with the pores of the humble what is the end, it is not just beating on its shoulder like after the bigots of Cory, it is entering on its shoulders like heroes the team and faith and freedom of a people.

It's just a question of showing the leaders can be rewarded.

Biggest spenders and 'kuripot' in the Senate

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Melinda Odyssey-Canseco

SENATORS BONG REVILLA AND TRILLANES TIED AS NO. 1 and 2 in the senatorial poll surveys. They are also among the biggest spenders of public money as shown in the Commission on Audit report recently published in the Philippine Star. Compiled by the Senate, the three senators spent over P17 million each to their office expenses. The remainder among those top people in this Lito Lapid, who spent P10.3 million and was seventh the three among the 23 members.

Among the senators who ran for the presidency, Sen. Noynoy Aquino spent P16.7 million compared to Sen. Manny Villar's P15.7 million, Sen. Richard Gordon was the least frugal, spending P14.6 million, which put him at No. 4 in the overall ranking.

The shocker is Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, who does not and cannot move around because he is in a detention stockade. He spent a whopping P17.1 million or P47,000 a day! Ironically, Trillanes' motivation in this kind of money from the government he sought to topple.

But by far the biggest spender in the Senate is his fellow senators with a military background and who since then loved to topple the Aquino government. Gen. Panfilo Lacson, who ranked up with P17.9 million in expenses.

The thriftiest among them all is Sen. Joker Arroyo who spent only P12.6 million and retained the No. 1 title despite his stint as the "Sausage of Congress" for being so dumpist since the time he entered the Senate. Arroyo is followed in the house roll by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., with expenses at P13.2 million, and Sen. Ralph Recto Sagasta, with P14.3 million.

The Thursday, Feb. 11, activities, at the Philippine Columbian Club in Pasay Drive, Pasay, Manila, the book on the life and times of one of the most distinguished public servants, Antonio de la Alia, titled "I Stand Men with a Tall Head," will be launched by his two daughters, Gloria de las Alas Montemolin and Mercedes de las Alas Concepcion, in cooperation with Secretary Alberto F. Fuchangco, in commemoration of late Antonio's 120th birth anniversary. The book launch will be complemented by an exhibit of memorabilia acquired in the distinguished and inspiring service to God and country in various government departments and in the business and civic sectors during the colonial era and the postwar decades, spanning over half a century until his death in October 1983 in Chicago, USA.

The long journey began when the 21-year-old barrio boy from Tabaquero, Sual, Pangasinan took the exam for "pensionados" in 1906 and qualified to enter Fullerton University on probation, soon he had only finished three years of grade school in the barrio and some year of high school at Batangas province. The national High School was the brainchild of his formal education in his native land. He has also topped his Fullerton University class and was allowed to enroll as a regular student in law and economics, obtaining his bachelor of laws degree in 1913. Antonio de la Alia was in about his master's class from Yale University (one leader), and was given the privilege of defending the valedictory address. He passed the bar exams in 1913, when only 19 passed out of the 500 who took them.

From there on, Don Antonio's long career saw him in politics. He served as speaker pro tempore in the first independence Congress in Manila and headed various offices of the executive department during the colonial period, among them: Theodore Roosevelt who later became a US president, Leonard Wood and E. J. Harrison. Subsequently, he headed various departments in the administration of different Philippine presidents from Manuel L. Quezon to Ferdinand Marcos. He is probably the only Filipino to become a constitutional convention delegate in both the 1935 and the 1971 constitutional conventions. (he was the oldest delegate in the latter). He was also elected to various civic organizations that have become household words today.

Just as fascinating as the career of this luminary from Pura Tad was the way he spent his moments of from their home in the family basement, after 12noy and Mercedes. He scanned each of a total of 140 folders begun by him and family members and photos. As they went through pages of the folders, they found not only documents, they found that they just couldn't stop reading, after reading the letters at his home, they went through memoirs, inspirations, interviews, etc. and slowly their father's exceptional life in public and private service unfolded before their eyes. It is a shame you could all document all his achievements, and in the end the two sisters discovered a completely different man from the person they earnestly knew as "Papa." As Ching Montemolin put it, it's like discovering a whole book from which you can add them about his legacy of "righteousness, integrity and love of his country and its citizenship." And the "It's about my personal belief that these are good men who exist and oftentimes one does not have to look far to find them. Often they are as close as those you would call Papa. The more we see the more we believe and encourage hope."

In telling their father's story about how he seized the opportunity to get an excellent education in the United States, the sisters told how from a high school in the province, Ching says, these special ingredients the pass but to give young people of this country. They hope that these youngsters would struggle to conquer their poverty, like their father did, by working hard to acquire a good education through the many opportunities ever available to the poorer sectors such as the scholarships offered by various universities and corporations have to the country or technical training or books. I agree: Education is indeed the great leveler.

It is watching you

I HAVE NO OBSESSION WITH STATUSES. HAVE YOU EVER taken the time to stare at the graceful, yet precise and calculated movement of a switch hand in it slowly glides across the surface of a cycle unrepentable? Have you ever put a needle to your ear and listened to the chatter of screws and wheels turning and rotating in each perfect harmonic precision, just not to would want that night kick while punched the toilet bowl once one too many?

Into the future? Great on the pragmatic solution of our day, I answer much haven't.

But then, who should "they" be? Will the world much we hear to it is for one silly person to give and examine unnecessarily the life that chair propped it on, or her one, whose only idea is to tell you that work starts at 9 or it is 10 minutes to lunch or that it would be time to get drunk with friends in an hour? We naively assume that it is there to serve our daily needs, because it is us who purchase it, it is us who pay for the necessary luxuries and services for it to keep going to be in good condition.

We it is that recently we do maintain that have as our own chasing it, as something more than just a mere piece. If you study watching enough, you will realize that it is a machine that whispers a sense of perfection and tenderness, and most importantly, it resonates with the interior lives of its buddy.

A mirror is an ever-watchful eye. You can look into its eyes of clothing worn on a day and count our with Zara or Bongo logo, but you could go to dozens of watch stores for weeks, and the even months or years, and never spot. But one exact like piece that, like a stare, lures you almost deadenly towards it.

It is unconscionable time we would simply waste a watch found or to bag having reliability. What is it that we look for in a watch? Is it the way the metal heat glows in the light? Is it the way it portrays our indescribable character? Is it the weightlessness of its presence? Or is it simply the price tag and the number of diamonds that dress outside and power?

Anyone could've guessed by now that I am struggling to explain by saying that it is watch is a personal object of habit, one, when it is something beyond mere physical appearance. It, just like the clothes we wear, reflects some form of our personalities, but unlike the fleeting nature of clothes and cell phones, one often wears the same watch day in and day out for years. Being something we see and wear every day is most fascinated, we tend to accompany that is made to charm your time and at the same time prepared to be a mere boss when reminding you of working deadlines. It is our vanity that overshadows the true nature of the watch, whether this a cunning devil devoted to impress the unsuspecting customers going to their boss.

Visible digital watches, analog watches are the best to use when it comes to carrying the precise time from the one's day you forgot wearing it. Even to study the time you entirely visited with will study by either being a second or a minute faster or slower depending on its design and the reliability of its parts. It is however this imperfection, which makes one realize how much we have become dependent digital watches with monotonous numbers. By impersonating the imperfection in our mood so it can watch without owe to do on every like a conversation who lacks behind bodies in order to appease the personal wild instincts of a contemporary dreamer. It is the documentary of our lives. On one that denies watches and watch the of our being that it is more than a mere tool for measure of existence. It is enough on watch made to be nothing more than entertainment for the curious completed being engaged to our watches in modern era.

The age-old experience to prove the existence of God is that if there is a watch on a sandy beach then there must be someone or some God who made it. Watches are a way of something that resembles order and purpose. One could relate this watch as a metaphor for humanity. Then again our history speaks of a different truth, a truth that tells of us as universal prisoner for chaos, proof that there is an ignorant and destructive self lurking in us all. So, humanity cannot be the watch, for humanity because we have yet to install order in the world, much less ourselves. We are also the bees having purpose, otherwise becomes and there would have been out of business.

Instead, our watch a there to count us, to laugh at our daily routine, to tower of our "quest" for meaning in a world devoid of anything that resembles order and purpose. Our watch is a watch with job, and because we unknowingly stick it to be making it else whenever it labors. For behind the shape-shifting watch seem to hide its own vanity, the watch is simply time itself—unfathomable, miserable, constant and perfect.

Are we always in the present in the once digital watch chosen to us? Does it ever laugh at us while wearing it? Does it prepare us reading through the wrong traffic, do we not all drift away from the now and bring ourselves back or forward an hour, a couple of months, or even a few years? One lifetime is but a grain of sand compared to the history of what has been and will become, yet we spend most of it away from the present, the only to appease the unconscious time we owe to us all. The once of the unrecognizable characters of yesterday and tomorrow by using memories to recount the past and dreams to fly to the future. As we travel, our minds will be there with a smile that is not a smile, with laughter that is hidden behind the sound of a lick, and a reminder that the answer of the universe would never give even a second back.

Rafael Lorenzo G. Canseco, 22, is a former professor of literature at De La Salle University.

YOUNG BLOOD

Rafael Lorenzo G. Canseco

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Send your contribution by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school/course and your e-mail/cellphone. If employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Complain wisely

"Those who have been allowed, under oaths, abolished our rights to thrive in our midst do not have the right to complain."

—Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and then Navotas Archbishop (saying now is not the time to "rant" rights of suffering people)

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Enough of demographic terrorism: Let's talk

COMMENTARY

John J. Carroll, S.J.

PEOPLE UP IN THE ATTICS OF PR. GREGORY famous ("Population wonder lessons for 92" by James, 1/5/10) from Rose Baldwin-Lanier ("Population bomb theories debated," Inquirer, 1/15/10) to Jaime Bautista ("Population and economic growth: The quotes of what has been called a 'demographic winter,'" i.e., a situation in which a society has too few young people to support the aged, which is a major problem in Europe and Japan, are now rapidly deep in their heels onto "Stop the demographic terrorism of Raul S. Manglapus in his 1968 book 'The Population Bomb'" is being echoed by another's concern that using the "depopulation bomb."

It is ironic, however, that she should argue as follows: "The Philippines is not producing more babies than necessary. The Philippine replacement rate of 1.8 children per female just enough to replace the parents. The work have still also be the economic force that will drive business and industry." Ironic because the same issue of the Inquirer noted in another article that in 2009 the number of jobless was 2.85 million, and underemployment 6.88 million. And the aside from the fact that at most 1.9 percent of the population is now abroad, eleven there is great pull by the lack of employment in the Philippines. If does not seem likely, contrary to Lander's assertion, that Filipinos are spending more babies than the economy can profitably absorb.

For what Lander neglects to do are drive business and industry. A vibrant economy requires natural resources, a healthy and educated workforce and capital investment in irrigation, roads, electricity and water supplies, factories, communications, etc. So all of these industries the Philippines unfortunately falls short. Natural resources such as forests, fishing grounds, topsoil, rivers, are gone or badly damaged; about the only one left in large quantities is coal, which is the dirtiest and the cheapest fuel. Our most valuable resource, our people, is grossly underdeveloped: in education by the measure we are behind countries such as Thailand. It's the "human freedom," a term that candidate Nicky Perlas attributed to this measure, who's prescribing results of the novelty for her.

Where I posed the questions to him on what role, if any, staff would program would play in a Perlas administration, Perlas suggested with his plan to create a Cabinet portfolio for "civil society affairs," which would be under whatever department the executive department and the executive secretary. Only then would people's organizations currently view concept.

On the other hand, Kapatirán's JC de los Reyes, an Ilonggan City councilor, opposed what I was asked "limited duties." He opposed such in terms of governance that lay solely within the narrow parameters of his conservative Catholic outlook, and the views of the institutional Church.

In a question posed by a reader who is a nurse or how he would address the positive aspects of the RH bill, which failed to make it through Congress due to vigorous (and undemocratic) opposition by the bishops. De los Reyes remarked that he believes the bill was "dangerous" because most of the controversy in this country raises abortions, even though I could only raise my eyebrows at.

BEFORE THE debate proper, we had a chance to interact with the candidates. I talked over to the host Ka Butch Gordon and asked him if he didn't think "we already have had to many debates."

"Yes, we already have had too many debates," he said, shaking his head while smoothing his tie over wearing such a thought cited. The city people who are against debates are those supporters of the idea that only the rich have the right to run for office.

We have the right. Without the debates which are covered by media, then only those candidates who can spend millions (billions?) are political active because only will have a chance to bring them to and their ideas to voters.

So I think our decision to not have debates is because he does so well in them. Articulate and quick on the draw, he relishes difficult questions and can talk about his subject but especially about his opponents' weaknesses. I suspect that the other many have been concerned with him in mind.

I'M REALLY of two minds about presidential debates. On one hand, I think they provide voters many actual political groundwork in which to base their choices. Certainly, more substantial than the information they would otherwise get only by 30-second TV ads, radio jingles or highly polished flyers. A debate provides voters a frank, personal look at the candidates under stressful conditions, certainly more for intelligence, wit, bravery and self-confidence, important qualities in a leader.

But a debate will not reveal to us a candidate's capacity for leadership, honesty or integrity. In fact, often it favors the duplicitous, the glib and the charismatic.

If it were enough to be articulate and to hit the right buttons with rhetoric and favored themes. In fact, in politics, the phrase of Abraham Lincoln is the face of partisan pressures and public sentiment. Richard Nixon was a master that few articles, it is easy enough to learn one's way.

So while I will continue following the debates, and will even provide links to pdfs to one, I am grateful that there is no debate in my province, because of the candidates' frames for office. Maybe we should just look on presidential debates as entertainment, albeit more informative than most.

And whom do you have a candidate like Sen. Jamby Madrigal to stir up the proceedings. Would the entertainment factor have leveled up with Pres. Joseph Estrada joining the race?

Rafael Lorenzo G. Canseco, 22, is a former professor of literature at De La Salle University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS

Send your contribution by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school/course and your e-mail/cellphone. If employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published

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THEY SAID

Complain wisely

"Those who have been allowed, under oaths, abolished our rights to thrive in our midst do not have the right to complain."

—Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and then Navotas Archbishop (saying now is not the time to "rant" rights of suffering people)

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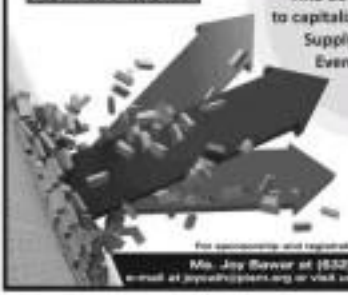

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Objectionable billboard

THE UNABATED EXPLOSION OF BILLBOARDS, if not outright obtrusive, is offensive to motorists along busy thoroughfares in further stress, culled with this formulation of an extremely large and gigantic billboard display of young male model in a provocative pose, wearing nothing but a seams brief he is endorsing as "the new second skin."

The billboard is so tragically but inappropriately erected facing the Magallanes International Bridge that, as you enter Makati City (northbound), it would run smack right into your eyes and face.

I do not want to sound too pious, nor do I speak for the others. But as for me, the advertisement is an insensitive and blatant disregard for family values and a total disregard of my children's right to be free from excessive public display of vulgar, lewd and unwholesome product endorsements. An advertiser may have the right to think of no equity to sell its product, but it should not use it to intentionally ruin the rights of other people, especially "the small ones because of their immunity by are not in a position to resist and protect themselves from the ill and pervasive effects of these pictures."

I write this as a single size only as a concerned citizen, but as a former student who majored in Advertising in my undergraduate course in the late '80s under the tutelage of some of the best advertising practitioners in the country. The likes of R. E. Dela Cruz, Bitoy Mendoza, Isabelo Crisostomo and other advertising genius taught me the lesson that "good advertising, combining not only to the last but also to the generally accepted standards of good morals and decency and is moral and serves the convenience of the country." This principle forms part of the 1988 Code of Advertising Ethics of the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (PANA).

I wonder if this Code of Advertising Ethics still exists for our advertisers.

—ROMULO B. MACALINTAL
Philamlife Village, Las Piñas City

LETTERS

Blair's doctrine threatens stability of states

TESTIFYING IN THE IRAQ WAR INQUIRY, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair expressed a dangerous doctrine that threatens the stability and existence of independent states, not to mention the lives of millions of innocent people all over the world.

He said he ordered British troops to join the US military invasion of Iraq because he was sincerely convinced that Iraq's President Saddam Hussein was a "monster" who was a threat to the West, the United States and somewhere or somehow, and who possessed weapons of mass destruction.

To unseat one class down terror no weapons of mass destruction. It also seems that Blair and US President George Bush had decided to invade Iraq even without the assent of the United Nations Security Council—the only international body authorized to sanction police action against a state. In short, the invasion was a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Blair's (and Bush's) doctrine of preemptive war reminded me of the Nazi doctrine of "lebensraum," which Hitler used as a reason to invade Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and eventually Russia. The doctrine was that Germany needed more land to survive.

It also reminded me of Hitler's reason for exterminating the Jews. Hitler was "absolutely convinced" that the Jews were a degenerate people who attempted the island of the Germanic Thus, with the apparent support of the vast majority of "civilized" Germans, he set about to exterminate the Jews in the most barbaric way by burning them in ovens to save the "purity" of the Aryan race.

The absolute belief of the most ultra leaders of Germany and Japan in the righteous of their cause did not prevent the International tribunals in Nuremberg and Tokyo from convicting them of—and hanging down for—war crimes. So why should the same "belief of righteous" on the part of Blair (and Bush) save them from being the same end?

Personal and political conviction is no justification for war or murder. The only accepted basis for depriving a man of his life is domestic law, and that for waging war is international law. Under international law, the only justified is the war of self-defense or the defense of another state that has been subjected to aggression. The leaders of the United States and Britain have always been preaching the need for observing the rule of law in order to preserve world peace and achieve human progress. Let them not, in the end, suffer the consequences of their failure or their weakness.

—MANUEL L. ALBARAN
spokesman, Movement for Freedom Fairness
mlalbaran@yahoo.com

OVER A DECADE OF BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN JOB SEEKERS AND HR PRACTITIONERS

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Cory on Time cover

THAT IS IN RESPONSE TO CESHARIO EX-Quino' me. To column, titled "The last time I saw Cory," he mentioned that the late President Corazon C. Aquino was featured twice as cover of Time Magazine.

Many people may not know this, but Presidents Cory was featured as cover of Time Magazine even before she became president. I have a copy of same Time Magazine issues way back in the mid-1980s. I kept them because I am one of those who really admired the late president for her simplicity and humility. Even if wished that I was able to meet her personally while she was still alive, but just the same her memory will always be remembered forever.

I also have the last two Time Magazine issues where we believed President Cory was featured once again on its cover (for the magazine's 60th Anniversary and Special Odyssey).

—FELIX SANDRO BORROMEO
fsmpolla_141@yahoo.com

Vulgar language in Senate

THE HEATED EXchange on the Senate floor, where supposedly distinguished senators used unseemly words should not be tolerated by any decent, peace-loving Filipino. Nay, it must be denounced in the strongest terms.

The vulgar language ignited the soldiers in it was exposed in many media. An incompetent phrase from the mouth of "honorable" senators become a dirty public joke, an affront to sensibilities. I fear senatorial senators could be that they should weapons lost.

Is this the kind of legacy they are handing down to our youth? How would these ingredients feel in their classrooms where they look back at their public servants?

It is indeed very unchristian to trade hurtful words in a debate. Debates they must, but in a dignified way using decent language that does not shred reasons with sarcasm, insult and invective. Following the footsteps and devotion bully, using vulgar thunder. Then, who or how their actions would be seen considering, by the young.

Clear and attuned of what we are heard and read, we offer ourselves to our prayers for our legislators, that the Holy Spirit may always guide their daring congressional deliberations, so that they will avoid the use of gutter language.

—FR. HOMER G. PADUA
(in behalf of
some late-gatherers
and the parish
council),
Risen Immaculate
Parish, Las Piñas City

No-holds-barred at PDI forum; Jamby steals show

From page A1

The forum lasted more than two hours and was aired live by DZRB, the AM radio station of GMA 7, which is the broadcaster's election coverage partner.

Madrigal stole the show by sniping at Villar at every opportunity. Hinting him for his extensive advertisements to his people's boycott of the Senate's last session day when common sense supposed to vote on the recommendation to censure him for the C-5 controversy.

Madrigal was on a roll when she seemingly flunked the test on how much a kilo of galunggong and rolled eggs cost.

Villar, at the interesting end of backfire from Madrigal and Zubiri, looked back when he emphatically declared he was spending his own money. He suggested that people ought to voting for the anonymous backers of his rivals who depended on campaign contributions.

No to Charter change

Villar, who has caught up on news from owner Ayalas, also showed the day's main challenge is once—that he would till vehemently oppose the convening of a constituent assembly to amend the Charter.

"Charter change will not be my priority. I believe it is not the important," he said in response to the question by former Senator and political analyst Jose Wedico. He said he'll leave it up to the people to decide on a referendum.

Dr. Ira Reyes, the youngest among the aspirants, said that while he might be supportive on voting the constitutional ban on the right ownership of land, he was still for a nationalist policy. He is so much so his stand against the reproductive health bill which he described as "really dangerous."

Villanueva had to defend his dual role as a religious figure and a politician, but he showcased points he advocating as a development for Mindanao.

Poe, who shrugged off his low survey ratings, declared that one of his first acts as president would be to recruit a Department of Civil Society Affairs.

A confident Trenkee came out strong on doing away with corruption in the bureaucracy by reducing temptation and increasing incentives for performance.

No new taxes

Trenkee's cousin Aquino, the consistent survey topnotcher stood by his position that he would not raise taxes if elected.

This drew a frosty rebuke from Gordon who said those promising no tax increase were lying because there simply was no way to address the budget deficit with no additional revenues.

Also on the ventpoll, like Madrigal, Gordon hit the filing of rebellion cases against the Aquinoans for the Nov. 22 massacre of 57 civilians and journalists in Maguindanao, saying the rebellion was meant to weaken the cause of justice.

Deposed President Joseph Estrada paid for his absence by being slammed as abnormal.

When debate organizer and Inquirer columnist Ana Roy announced that he would not debate it, the audience laughed and some even applauded.

Gordon drew the ideal Estrada is by firming his propose stance and lamenting the Filipinos' kind of "political mentality" and others by accepting and begging a candidate who had been convicted for plunder.

All about character

Most had drawn the business debate's purpose, saying this would show the candidates' "character or lack of it" and expose his or her "confidence or lack of it."

The debate was moderated lively also by naughty and witty questions, which made some snobbish dares flash and others doze.

Trenkee made one dare that would be no domestic quarrels in putting his mother in-law No. 1 on his list. Aquino had to answer that while he was no "bahid-gear" brother, he would not be under the distress of his popsies and "unconstitutional" mistresses.

Could Madrigal see something good about Villar? She did but looked good. One related story on Page A2.)

Madrigal was suffocating in her own Villar crusade when a reader dropped in a surprise quiz for her. Do you know how many kilo of galunggong and roll eggs cost? She was not allowed her gut off by saying she's a vegetarian. (Pls checked. -Ed-ito-Ed)

Madrigal and Gordon apparently enjoyed being the debate's hecklers, and the record applauded when her subject are Villar, who tried to keep his cool on the he end of the stage. (They were positioned at alphabetical order.)

But Villar had his own share of supporters on the crowd, who applauded when he offered an apologies for his rags-to-riches story and for unabashedly spreading his own money on ads.

Crowd favorites

From the applause, the crowd favorites were Aquino, Gordon, Trenkee, Villar and Madrigal.

The candidates were allowed to have 20 supporters in the audience to applaud them.

The candidates fielded questions from nine panelists Inquirer columnists Raul Pangalangan and Augusto Boysan III and senior reporter Jr. Tanzon on law and politics; columnists Rina Jimenez-David and Richard Tan and Inquirer youth section editor Pam Pastor on social issues; and columnists Clarke to Mendoza and Inquirer Senior Reporter Jr. Tanzon on economic issues.

In addition, there were questions from the floor by Katrina Pacis-Ito, Beverly Longid, dean Rudolf Rimando of the UP College of Mass Communication, Peter Pedroche of Philippine Business for Education, UP student Nonie de la Paz-ar, Gil Galman of Philippine Business for Social Progress, Sylvia Claudio of Women Unit Volunteer Work, Nikkah Business Club's Alberto Lim, Rotary reporter Manny Magno and Villabee.

Pangalangan opened the debate by asking Aquino about his statement that he would not reappoint a Chief Justice appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The other questions included how to address the weaknesses in the military, corruption in the Bureau of Customs, political dynasty, prime crimes, solving the media, the separation of Church and state, the Aeon Charter, mining, how to solve the peace and poverty problem in Mindanao, the division of congress and districts, the environment, the elderly, education, urban housing, divorce and sex education, the National Stevedore Allotment of local governments, the pork barrel, the former administration's mission package, debt payments, cuts, the bungganing Estrellas and of course poverty.

Shaping public discourse

Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, to her welcome remarks, said the forums debate was the paper's contribution to the country's most important election as it generated and marshed the free in a series of activities for the Inquirer's 25th anniversary this year.

She said that despite widespread pessimism, the candidates have at least made themselves available for such debates, where the public can get to know them platforms. Saying that this election campaign period begin today she said that "we're the hope, in hope that the event will help shape public discourse today and the next 90 days and beyond."

Remember thanked the Inquirer's organization of the debate, Globe Telecom, represented by Jaime and Fernando Zobel de Ayala, and the UP College of Mass Communications and 14 partner organizations.

Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto, editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Inquirer founder Eugenia Apostol and publisher Inquirer Yambot led the Inquirer family in the event, which was also graced by some diplomats and members of political parties and representatives of candidates.

Madrigal's husband Ben Isidro, Villar's niece children and Trenkee's wife Rep. Nikki Prieto-Trenkee were among those who came to watch.

Tickets ran out for the debate as around 2,000 people filled the UP Theater.

WELCOME Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez chats with Manny Villar, Bayani Fernando and Camille Villar before the start of the presidential debate. STORY ON PAGE A1

Candidates up close and personal behind the stage

From page A1

Question Girl.

Unlike the other candidates, Trenkee remained visibly without an aide or whatever adult watching at the holding area backstage. Asked where his supporters were among the partisan crowd gathering outside, he said they were just "out there."

Sen. Benigno Aquino III walked in looking taken by Gordon's "mestizo Iddol" and remarking about the need to watch his "language" and caption "manners" lest his mouth get fanned "180 degrees."

Most easy questions

"You have interesting questions and they won't be easy for you," Aquino told the Inquirer.

"This boils down to one's rich knowledge," Sen. Manny Villar replied, when asked if he did any preparation for yesterday's debate.

Sounding like a veteran of debates, Villar cited what for him was a major disadvantage of being the "last" speaker, especially if the candidates were arranged alphabetically.

"Most of the time, you're first," he said to Filipino. "When you're the last, everything had been said and you have to think of something new to say."

Ideal length of debate

Villar said the ideal length of a debate should be about two hours because "beyond 2[illegible] no get more!"

Like Aquino, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago thought twice as long as the debate was just right.

About 30 minutes into the debate and after the opening round of questions, Aquino was the first to take his seat as the others remained on their feet, leaning on the lectern and one was seen looking through his tablet.

The first to be asked among the debaters, Aquino answered in Filipino a question that was entirely framed in English, signaling early that the exchange would be a bilingual affair.

But Aquino was also the one who looked most relaxed as the debate kicked off.

Sen. Richard Gordon, while explaining his plan for the country's education system, held up and waved for the crowd to see a Bimble Bee size of a notepad to stress the need for students to be tech-savvy.

"That's his prop," said a journalist who saw Gordon speak about the same topic last week.

It also became immediately clear how the candidates were thrown off by the rapid-fire style of questioning. The panels prepared specific questions for each candidate instead of treating one of to be answered by all.

Microphones were turned off to strictly impose the time limit, often causing the speakers to mid-sentence, a control mechanism they're apparently not used to.

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Bankers Association of the Philippines

Social notes, show biz buzz

From page A1

[illegible] one of Jamby's quips.

- Best in comedy: Jamby
- Runner-up comedy: [illegible]
- Most Unbiased opportunist award: Nograles
- Best presented panel: Bro. Eddie Villanueva, look on exhibits
- Best-dressed top: Dick, Manny
- Most standing ball: Go, for Delfin says he sees eye to eye with BBM
- Most expressive arms and hands: JC who chopped to one side of the lectern for

space to gesticulate.

- Fashion look on the debate runaway: Loose and easy-fitted. JC, Dick, Nick, Jamby.
- Most A-list audience: Pilar's edict at the UP Theater the likes of Erin Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Leticia Sagalongos, Rony Sagalongos, Andrew Tan who was sporting at the entrance.
- Most involved daughter: Camille Villar who flashed her watchful smile at her dad whenever Jamby [illegible] a swipe at him.
- Most photographed person in the audience: Ms. Ayala Trenkee.

MODEL Princess Trenkee STORY ON PAGE A1

Manny: People like me who were once poor should be given a chance

By Michael Lim Ubac

"IS IT DIFFICULT TO THINK that a poor fellow can also become President of the Philippines?"

Work that statement, Nacionalista Party standard-bearer Manny Villar asked members his audience in Bacnotan, La Union province, on Monday.

Villar said that statement by Marcelino Libanan, a former Bacnotan mayor who was a close friend of Villar's late father Eduardo, was the driving force behind his decision to run for President.

"Libanan was a poor man. He was a tricycle driver. He was a mayor. He was a congressman. He was a governor. He was a senator. He was a Cabinet secretary. He was a presidential candidate. He was a poor man who became rich," Villar said.

"I am not an actor. I don't have a mother who was President. So sibling who's an actress. It is impossible that people like me, who were once poor, is given a chance to lead this country. But I'm here in the delight of his supporters in the crowd.

Aquino is the only son of the late Presidents Corazon Aquino and one of his sisters is the former actress and TV host Kris Aquino.

Villar dismissed his economic policy, but declined to name the composition of his economic team, for now.

Instead of hanging on name tarpaulins, Villar said he was looking at "quality" in forging up tax collection efficiency from the current 13.14 percent to 17 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) to fund the planned massive infrastructure spending eight as the first term alone.

"It is very important for the next President to be able to manage this nation squarely from Day 1. We must be able to run and hit the ground running. The nation have no time to waste. Precious [while] should be addressed all at the same time," he said.

Erap a no-show; handlers say PDI 'biased'

By Norman Bordadora and Christian V. Esguerra

WHAT IF A CASE OF CONFLICT-ing schedules or a mole?

Explaining his absence at an Inquirer-sponsored debate of presidential candidates at the University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City, deposed President Joseph "Erap" Estrada said he had to meet a delegation of political leaders from Mindanao yesterday, today meeting.

Presumptive Senator Bong Revilla, ex-Agusan lit. Manuel Villar, Richard Gordon and Manila Ana Consuelo Madrigal, evangelist Rev. Eddie Villanueva, reviewer, novelist Susana Fabay and Councilor JC de los Reyes.

Estrada said he wanted to attend the UP forum but had to receive the delegation composed of more than 100 political leaders from Luzon and Visayas.

But his handlers had a different reason for Estrada's nonappearance.

'Biased against Erap'

Mariquis Salcedo, Estrada's spokesperson, said in a statement: "The executive committee of Erap feels that the debate is always biased against Erap, that it would work more harm than good to attend, and advised President Erap not to go."

Salcedo, who is also an Inquirer contributor, said her boss did not attend upon the advice of his campaign managers.

Senator Jinx Ejercito Manda, Estrada's chief campaigner, complained that media outlets, like the Inquirer and 98.7, highlighted only the absence of the ex-president in debates.

"Fortune only upon the campaign substitute," Macedo said on Sunday.

'Closer to Inquirer'

Asked yesterday whether he was holding a grudge against the Inquirer that prevented him from attending the event, Estrada said in Filipino: "There's no room in that. I really want to be closer to the Inquirer."

Estrada, who is seeking to return to Malacañang following his ouster by a "people power" uprising in 2001, said he had to keep his appointment with the Mindanao leaders.

"If I didn't meet them, they'd stay for one more day and I'd have to spend for their hotel and food. That would have been expensive," he said with a laugh.

However, Estrada said he had already attended several presidential forums and wanted to concentrate on raising his ratings in election surveys by meeting voters in his campaign sorties.

"I have to catch up," said Estrada, who has trailed Direl in the surveys, after Aquino and Villar.

For the eve of the presidential debate, Estrada himself told the Inquirer in Filipino: "I have another appointment. I'm just wanting my time to those Indians because others are not attending anyway."

The ousted president had been attended several forums organized by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting at Miriam College, Ateneo de...Silliman, Ateneo and former Solicitor Secretary Gilbert Teodoro...did not appear.

Proper platform

By not showing up at the Inquirer debate, Estrada did not exactly shake a backing, official Richard Gordon, another presidential aspirant, quarreling the sincerity of his program platform.

Gordon lashed out at Estrada, who was convicted of plunder and later pardoned, and asked whether the former President would be allowed to join the May 10 presidential derby.

Noting he accuses his friends will be a "measure of the political maturity in our country," he said.

"Until the Supreme Court says otherwise, he can run, but, in my opinion, it's the people that will judge," Gordon said in Filipino.

A question of values

"But what about our values? Is it all right for us that a convict, after being pardoned by the President, is now facing us? It's up to you," Gordon said.

Estrada, who is also a senator candidate in Pampanga, was organized by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting at Miriam College. Ateneo de...Silliman, Ateneo and former Solicitor Secretary Gilbert Teodoro...did not appear.

The ousted president had been attended several forums organized by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting at Miriam College.

Campaign period for nat'l positions starts today

By Kristine L. Alave, Nikko Dizon and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

TELL THAT TO THE MARINES.

The campaign election period for national positions officially starts today with a warning from the Commission on Election (Comelec) and other watchdog groups that they would not tolerate violations of laws ensuring fair balloting.

The Comelec said it was encouraging citizens to file charges against politicians violating campaign laws or call hotlines 525-9382, 525-9297, 525-9581, 525-9296, 525-9335, 525-9294, 527-3175 and 527-0823.

Those who are charged with an election offense risk imprisonment and being barred from public office.

Unofficially, the campaign started months ago and all indications are as much money has been spent as the elections draw near.

Still, Commissioner Gregorio Larrazabal had this to say in a news briefing: "The Comelec is bent on ensuring a level playing field for candidates this campaign period. This is why we will be strict in enforcing campaign rules, especially those on posting campaign materials."

While the campaign period for national posts begins today, those for local contests starts March 26. It will end on May 9—two days before the vote.

DAY 1 A man walks along Magallanes Street in Davao City amidst a lot of political posters plastered on the wall, a possible violation of Comelec's campaign laws, as the campaign period for national positions starts today. EDGAR D. SAMAR/PDI

Ramon Casiple, a member of the Genesis Advocacy Commission, said the Comelec should throw the book at erring candidates from Day 1 to send a strong message that it would not pussyfoot on campaign law which he said was "almost non-existent."

Campaign spending

Under the Fair Elections Law, candidates for president and vice president are allowed to spend P10 for each voter. If the candidates has a party the party can contribute another P5.

Candidates for other positions are allowed P3 per voter, in which a candidate's party can add P5 toward his campaign.

They are limited to only 120 minutes of airtime on television and 180 minutes on radio per station for the entire campaign. Those aspiring for local posts are limited to an hour of television airtime and an hour and a half of radio airtime per station.

Candidates are allowed only to post streamers and posters of certain sizes in areas designated by the Comelec.

Posters made of cloth, paper or similar materials should not exceed 2 feet by 3 feet in size. Streamers should not go over the mandated size of 3 feet by 8 feet.

Posting of campaign materials in public places such as stores, bridges, public buildings, trees, electric posts and train stations are banned.

Most expensive campaign

Casiple, who is also an official of the Consortium for Electoral Reforms, described the campaign for the 2010 national and presidential elections as the costliest and expensive yet.

He noted that Senators Manny Villar and Mar Roxas had been campaigning since 2007.

According to Casiple, Villar is probably spending hundreds of millions of pesos for his television spots, which began airing way before he announced his candidacy for president.

Caravans

The Nacionalista Party (NP) announced that Villar, its presidential standard bearer, and his running mate, Sen. Loren Legarda, and their senatorial slate would begin their campaign in Iloilo and proceed to Calamba in Laguna, the birthplace of national hero Jose Rizal.

"The cradle of heroes is always the best springboard of change," the NP said.

Sen. Richard Gordon, another presidential aspirant, and his running mate Bayani Fernando will ride on a huge karen pinoy (stuck designed to look like "Optimus Prime," the fictional robot used in the animated series "Transformers," for their campaign launch today.

Former Sen. Ted and allies the Duck will host Gordon and Fernando from Manila's City to Imus, Cavite, for the formal campaign kick-off program.

Asked why Optimus Prime? Fernando said "because we are the transformers."

FACTS AND FIGURES

POSITIONS AT STAKE

President	1
Vice President	1
Senator	12
House of Representatives	
District	230
Party List	57
Governor	80
Vice Governor	80
Member, Sangguniang Panlalawigan	760
City Mayor	121
City Vice Mayor	121
Member, Sangguniang Panlungsod	1,518
Municipal Mayor	1,481
Municipal Vice Mayor	1,481
Member, Sangguniang Bayan	11,990

NATIONAL CANDIDATES

President	10
Vice-President	8
Senators	61

VOTING

Registered voters as of January 15, 2013	52,722,732
Registered voters in the 2013 elections	40,841,711
Voters turnout in 2010 elections	32,000,864 (77.9 percent)

LOGISTICS

Printed ballots	75.4M
Number of vote-counting machines	82,000
Ballots per machine	1,000
Backup PCOS machines	5,729
Number of compact units	1,823
Voting booths	0.8"x 20"

Compiled by Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research

Audience wanted answers to questions that were not

From page A1

should have been asked about Hacienda Luisita. Up to now, no forum had personally asked him about this issue."

But Elizabeth San Diego of Quezon City disagreed. "I have already read and heard a lot about the case of Hacienda Luisita so I did not want to hear more about it anymore," she said.

Ateni Ateni, a professor at UP Baguio, said, "I expected that someone would ask former Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro about his links to Poveda Arroyo."

A 20-year old student leader said he would have wanted to ask Sen. Manuel "Manny" Villar: "How much money does a presidential hopeful have to spend on political ads?"

NBN 2TE, other issues

"There was no question about NBN/ZTE," said Noel, 18, a student. "I wanted to know if the candidates were still for setting schools and other issues, but then, I guess the issue of NBN/ZTE is controversial."

Tina Bello, a physics major, lamented the lack of questions about "economic and development and on science and technology" he said. "I would have liked to hear their views, at least on the way they will give attention and provide investments for these fields."

A graduate student, Ana Marlena, 24, said she "did not hear about the candidates' stand on the government's fight against terrorism, and on the Philippines' alliance with the US in this regard."

"For the Social Issues panel, discussions were focused primarily on reproductive health," said Dave Bautista-Inigo, 19, a student. "Nothing wrong with that, but I wanted to hear also about agrarian reform and other social issues, such as education, or true being as controversial."

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Other issues that attendees wished were raised and tackled during the debate were on political and human rights, particularly for women, the economy, unemployment, and labor issues like unemployment and labor contractualization.

More time for responses

Many in the audience wished more time was allowed for the candidates' responses.

"We would like it if the candidates was able to at least finish a statement he had begun instead of being cut halfway through when the microphone was turned off," a 19-year-old female student said.

A number of attendees were disappointed that deposed President Joseph Estrada did not show up.

"We're all questioning why he was allowed to run...and why he's running again in the first place...and I would have liked to hear his reasons and reactions to the criticisms against him," said Christian, a law student.

Some commented that the forum seemed like an "elite affair."

"People's organizations were conspicuously absent from among those who asked questions on the floor," Julius Cainglet of the Federation of Free Workers said.

Allen de la Fuente, a UP psychology student, said business

HOT EXACTLY KISSING COUSINS They are political twin cousins Gilbert Teodoro and Neptuno Aquino. They shake hands at the holding room of the UP Theater before the start of the Inquirer-sponsored debate. Also in photo is Nicanor Perlas. EVAN NICOLAS

A-LISTERS Business tycoon Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto and husband Alex Gili believe the merit of the debate at the UP Theater. ALEX GILI

organizations were given "undue importance" in the forum.

Informed choice

But many said the presidential debate was successful in helping them make an informed choice for the coming elections.

"I guess I heard everything that I wanted to hear from the candidates because now I know whom not to vote for. Before I came here I was undecided on two candidates, but now I think I am 99 percent sure whom to vote for," said a female UP graduate student.

Christian said: "Some of the candidates that I have completely written off my list surprised me with their answers, they potential, some people also lose confidence easily, so it's good to know candidates amply through their advertisements."

The forum even led some voters to change their minds about their first preferences.

Changing their minds

"I was disappointed with Noynoy I was initially for him, but I saw that what he spoke, he lacked conviction. He gave answers that were too general, and he wasn't direct to the point. Binding doing much to materialization (he said, let's not assuming). Gibo was more specific," said Mike, 31, a businessman.

Diane, 32, a human resources officer, listed some candidates' answers too general. "I was impressed with Gibo, Richard Gordon [and] Gibo [Gilbert Teodoro], though, because their answers were specific and you could see that they actually studied [the issues well]. Some of the answers were [they had] concrete plans. From the others you simply heard, more of the same: blah, blah, blah."

Ian Diego said she liked the forum very much. "The questions were answered ... I hope there will be a follow-up."

Of 'GG,' salted eggs, hair dye, FG and veggies

From page A1

curious when asked: Would you have the current price of "galunggong"?

"I think about P80 per kilo?" Sen. Bimbo Fernandez "Sanjay" Madrigal replied, quickly drawing snickers from the bleachers at the UP Theater.

The question, posed to his alone, was apparently a test of **orthodoxy** for aspiring public servants. Even one of Manila's Old **Rich Families** would really relate to the grind and toil of the life**time**. Everyman, galunggong being the proverbial "poor man's fish." (There are two types of galunggong—golong**gong** and bilog—but Madrigal's and galunggong labels treated **and** [...]

The fish had become an **unofficial economic barometer** for Filipinos since democracy **icon** Cory Aquino used it to shame the Marcos dictatorship in the 1986 snap elections.

In one of her memorable campaign clashes against Marcos, Cory Aquino then noted how the price could no longer afford even the supposedly **frugal** viand under his regime.

Off the mark

Madrigal's answer yesterday was way off the mark. The prevailing retail price of galunggong at 6:40 p.m. Feb. 4 was P120 per kilo, according to a government website.

Madrigal later conceded she wouldn't have correctly guessed the price anyway because "I'm a vegetarian."

A follow-up query—how about the price of salted eggs?—also caught Madrigal off guard, but she also managed to wiggle out of it. "I also don't eat eggs," she said in Filipino.

Pre-match of the two-hour debate, however, the lone woman contender in a field of 10 presidential candidates dished out the day's most outraging remarks, proving vividly that the Aquino and Marcos are the only rival dyes had antagonized the most, Sen. Manny Villar.

French husband

If elected, Madrigal said, she would not let her husband Atty. Jean Claude Velasco be involved in government, though he may be addressed as "FG" for being a "French gentleman."

"That's as far as he goes," she said. Velasco may not engage in any business deals or negotiate or else "I will sue his head, his tongue."

"I will quarrel him if he becomes like the present FG," she said, apparently referring to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, the President's controversial spouse.

Children in political ads

Madrigal also complained about politicians' ads that "use children and actors who even have to pay P30 million just to endorse you."

They are "an insult to the Filipino intelligence," she said.

The audience quickly seized, though, that she was talking a shot specifically at Villar, widely perceived as the biggest ad spender so far among the presidential aspirants.

Madrigal spoke of people "who have spent P1 billion [for] ads" and "who think they can buy Malacañang"—remarks found from her on the Senate floor records when she demanded that plunder charges be filed against Villar over the C-5 road project controversy.

"I have no jingles," said Madrigal, who is running as an independent. "My ads are merely a reflection of my political platform and my principles."

Celebrity endorser

A popular, however, reminded Madrigal—and the audience—that she, too, had paid a celebrity endorser. Daily Sun [turned] to star in her campaign ads in the 2004 senatorial elections.

Madrigal then turned sweetly: "I have only one baby of my own. I will not expose it because I do not believe you [must] expose a mistake. But I also don't believe you should perpetrate the fact that you perpetrated by a big budget."

Madrigal found another opportunity for more barbs at Villar while answering—even when the question was about milk.

Milk code

She blamed the "boycott" organized by Villar and his support-

ers in the Senate minority for the chamber's failure last week to pass "a milk code that would have saved the lives of many infants."

"We were corralling milk companies from advertising [that] their products were substitutes for breast milk," she said. "This proposed bill wouldn't have saved lives because [certain baby food] products are really not meant to replace breast milk. They're mixed with dirty water and [the poor do because of it."

She said the measure could have been passed if not for a "very inconsiderate colleague."

When asked if she had anything good to say about Villar in the debates, she replied, without much of a pause, "Maganda po [ang pagsisa ng debat nya. Dito chod hari' kasi ganyan]."

With a report by Alyssa Bereno/INQ

Editor Teddyboy S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Cabeza

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Arum: Pacquiao-Valero possible, but...

By Ray Lunerva

AN EXPLOSIVE BOUT BETWEEN FILIPINO pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao and knockout artist Edwin Valero is on the drawing board with promoter Bob Arum doing the preliminary sketching.

The name of Valero resurfaced as a possible Pacquiao opponent after the Venezuelan stopped Mexican Antonio Demarco in nine rounds Saturday to keep his World Boxing Council lightweight title in Monterrey, Mexico.

Arum, who promotes Pacquiao, however, cautioned that it won't happen right after the Pacquiao-Jeffrey Chitalay fight on March 15 for the World Boxing Organization welter crown.

Though the 28-year-old Valero holds a fine mark (27-0) record, all by knockout, he was knocked out twice before by Demarco (28-1-2, 20 KOs).

"He (Valero) wants to fight Manny, but to fight Pacquiao he has to prove himself at 140," Arum told BoxingScene on Sunday.

"The (Valero) plan would be to go up to 140 ... fight some good fight with no weights."

Arum added Valero also needs to secure a United States visa (revoked due to drunken driving) and a license to fight in Nevada.

Meanwhile, Ancer 640 BoxingTalk.com Sunday that Ador sales for the Pacquiao-Chitalay battle at the Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, have exceeded 20,000.

Intal keys Ginebra surge

FOR GINEBRA COACH JOSEL Gichico, JC Intal's resurgence as a bigtime player is one of the best things to have come out from the long absence of superstars Mark Caguioa and Jayjay Helterbrand.

"If there's a good thing that happened without Jayjay and Mark at JC finding a niche in the system," Gichico said of the high-flying swingman who pumped in a career-high 28 points to the Gin Kings' 113-100 victory over Talk 'N Text Sunday night in the deciding match of their semifinal series.

With his performances, Intal earned the nod as the KFC/Accel PBA Press Corps Player of the Week for the period Feb. 1 to 7, beating Purefoods guard Junjun Sigi for the honor.

"JC has gone a long way as a player for Ginebra," Gichico said of Intal. —Gabriel P. Tigno

MVP justifies walkout

TNT's Game 4 protest action 'right decision'

By Gabriel P. Tigno

"IT WAS THE RIGHT DECISION UNder the circumstances."

This was the explanation Talk 'N Text team owner and Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas president Manny V. Pangilinan offered two nights after the Game 4 walkout by the Tropang Texters Wednesday that marred their quarterfinal series with the Barangay Ginebra Kings.

The walkout allowed the Gin Kings to win by forfeiture and tie the best-of-five series in the KFC/PBA Philippine Cup at 2-all. Ginebra eventually clinched a semifinal slot with a hard-fought win Sunday.

Pangilinan did not elaborate on the exact reason for the walkout but he congratulated the Gin Kings for a well-deserved march to the semifinals against rivals.

"Ginebra played very well, they deserved to win," Pangilinan said.

COACH Chot Reyes (fifth from left) and his Tropang Texters vacate the court in protest against the officiating. AUILT VEN CRUZ

Pangilinan could not say whether a similar challenge is in the offing after the Texters failed in their bid to become the first back-to-back all-Filipino champions in 26 years.

The Texters, who complained of poor officiating during the series, are having a hefty fine for the walkout, which amounted from the Pingxin Deal 2 called on Standard de Guzman with one minute left in the first quarter.

According to league rules, Talk 'N Text will be fined at least P500,000 for its failure to return to court after the seven-minute grace period. The league is expected to announce the amount of the fine today.

Talk 'N Text team manager Virgil Villaviciencio said the walkout succeeded in sending a message of their unhappiness with the officiating.

"We regret. The important thing for us was that the message was sent," Villaviciencio said. "It was a risk we had to take."

There were concerns that Talk 'N Text would not show up for Game 5.

"I was for the public and the PBA," Villaviciencio said in explaining their decision to play in Game 5.

Satria Muda seals ABL title clash with Patriots

INDONESIA SPOILED the supposed showdown between the league's top seeds as Satria Muda BritAma trounced the fourth-seed Singapore Slingers, 88-76, Thursday to arrange a championship showdown with the Philippine Patriots in the Asean Basketball League.

GAME 3 SCORES
(Stamp Sports arena, Pasay City)
4 p.m. — Philippine Patriots vs Indonesia Satria Muda Britama **(Game 3 of best-of-five finals)**

American import Nakim Miller hooked half of his 22 points in the last seven minutes as Satria Muda took the winner-take-all Game 3 semifinal duel at the Singapore Indoor Stadium.

Satria Muda will be the title series' homecourse unconfirmed Patriots and Satria Muda, the third seed who overcame the Slingers' homecourse semifinal edge, is on Friday at the Youson Sports Arena in Pasig City.

Despite the aborted showdown between the league favorites, Patriots officials expect a tough series with coach Louie Alas citing Satria Muda's deep bench.

"We have an intense rivalry with Indonesia dating back to the Souths Club Championship, so I expect the series to be an emotional one," said Hebron Centro CEO Mikee Romero, who co-owns the team with TV 5 top honcho Tony Boy Cojuangco.

"But I have strong faith in our boys. We're determined to win the first-ever title of the franchise."

Miller, whose triple triggered a late run that shattered a 67-67 deadlock, also posted a team-high 14 rebounds aside from five blocks.

The Patriots earn a perfect 3-0 elimination record over Satria Muda, the only team in the league with no Filipino players since Dowsett, who it dropped former PBA player Benny Cheng from its roster. —Antonio M. Pesco

PSC seeking Joey's help in solving NSA rows

By Jane Meneses

IF YOU CAN'T GO STRAIGHT TO THE boss, the next best move is to talk to his trusted lieutenant.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Harry Angping yesterday said he would ask Asian Games *chef de mission* Joey Romasanta to help solve the leadership issues among troubled national sports associations for the sake of the 28th southeast Asian Games.

Angping said that meeting groups in cycling, billiards, wushu, badminton, archery and equestrian should settle their differences as the NSAs are used their best Asian bets.

"I'm hoping to sit down with him (Romasanta) one of these days to finish things out," said Angping.

Romasanta could not be reached for comment last night.

Diplomatic and solid-mannered, Romasanta is a trusted aide of Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr., who is critical of Angping's policies in the government sports agency.

"We should be gentlemen enough to talk and know the problem of each NSA so we'll have the chance to avoid the best possible scam," said Angping.

At the Southeast Asian Games in Laos in December last year, Angping succeeded in convincing the group of Nolasco Chan of the billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines to agree to a truce with the faction of Antare "Beng" Bagtas.

It paved the way for the formation of the billiards "dream team" led by world champions Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Ronnie Alcano, Roberto Gomez and Rubilen Amit, who came up with two of the team's three gold medals.

"It's a difficult job to play referee for both sides," said Angping.

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What's wrong with MVP's Talk 'N Text?

BABE EYE

Recyb Trinidad

ACTUALLY, IT WASN'T EVEN CLOSE.

Of course, the opposite is equally true right.

JC Intal indeed had to "deliver the most solid performance of his career while hanging Ginebra played with multi-assists to eliminate defending champion Talk 'N Text" in the deciding Game 5 of the KFC/PBA Philippine Cup.

But there were deeper, more alarming factors behind the dismal fall of the Tropang Texters in the decisive Coliseum on Sunday.

* * *

If not, why wouldn't star owner Manny V. Pangilinan skip behind the scene an hour, and keep his usual aloof, shy, unseen mentoring off the last ordinary fights, before handing his usually grumpy to the special coach?

Will really the single biggest supporter of RP sports from the private sector, did not look exactly bothered.

Nor he obviously could not find prompt answers to a set of nagging questions.

* * *

No reason, MVP discovered that, contrary to earlier allegations, Ginebra can beat Talk 'N Text on any day if the refs called it fair and right — not the other way around.

Talk is left to say Ginebra is for genius than Talk 'N Text.

No, more for sure, Ginebra, like an inverse a four-guy go-go cub, gains in composition and confidence, while Talk 'N Text, the dread of supposedly fastbreak and fastbreak, is shallow spouse, capped by lost individual points.

The squad, in short, played to a low percentage tempo at the season.

Ginebra, although less-equipped, starts into the Talk 'N Text pointed were unseen hounded every nook of the win.

Ginebra's scoring snapper, mere Hayes had movement, was able to post an early lead and enjoy a cushion through the closing quarters.

* * *

Ginebra won not exactly out of Talk 'N Text's work in the final stretch and coach Chot Reyes overemphasized on his top scorer. Cardona, slapping Cannon — who did not happen to be his fierce defenders.

The logic was simple: loosen fire with fire.

What followed was a bull of scarbal-longed things put Barbo, starting JC Intal.

A further Reyes was most caught by the cameras clutching his hands, was unlike a Ginebra coach who spoke up to cast her head-down on a fire.

Did he suddenly realize the horrible chance he had caused his boss, MVP — and RP basketball for that matter — while his strategy went awfully off?

Reyes did try in vain and try he was right.

Ginebra coach Joey Lastimosa did not have to tell both coach Reyes and Mr. Pangilinan they were wrong, very wrong.

SOFTBALL KINGS Team members and officials of Rizal Technological University pose for posterity with league commissioner Johnny Perez, Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines secretary general Dante Francisco and sponsors after saying the recent Filipinas Softball Fall Season tournament. The RTU Blue Thunder downed the Globe Asiatique Boaters, 9-3 and 12-5, at the Rizal Sports Complex in Pasig on Saturday in decisive Game 3 of the championship series of the tournament presented by Cobiseno Lhuillier and sponsored by LBC. The league's inaugural tournament drew five teams.

RP settles for 2nd in World Team Pool Cup

THE PHILIPPINES SUCCESSFULLY FOUND ITS form scoring and bound to Britain, 6-3, Sunday in the finals of the first World Team Pool Cup Championship in Hanover, Germany.

The Filipinos, made up of reigning World 9-ball champion David Pesek, 2008 World 10-Ball titlist Francisco Appleton, Earl Bayon, Mark Gray and Dennis Orcollo, bagged the top prize of $100,000 (about P4.6-million).

The ISP team of former World 9-ball and 8-ball champion Dennis Orcollo, former world No. 1 Dennis Grenlo, two-time national titlist Lee Vann Corteza, Japan-based Antonio Gabica, Warren Kiamco and Marlon Manalo settled for the $50,000 runner-up purse.

Losing semifinalists Greece and Russia received $30,000 each in the 48-nation tournament sanctioned by the World Pool Billiard Association (WPA).

The Filipinos, supported by the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines, Ilaya Sports, Happy Pencil and Pioneer Billiards Table, had a forgettable start with a 0-1 thrashing of the Britons in the first game of the 8-ball format's doubles.

It turned out to be a brief fling as glory in the Britons was the several game of the 8-ball format's doubles, 6-1, to level the score at 1-1.

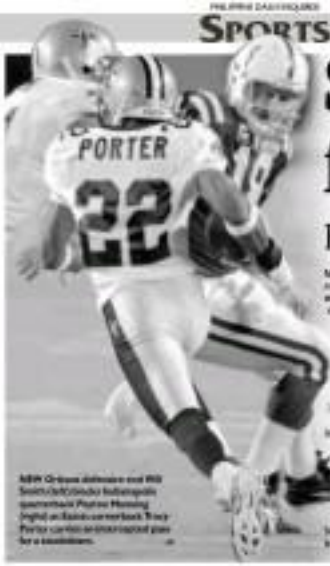
Gray, Bayon and Appleton then banked out individual triumphs to seal the victory.

Gray scored identical 4-2 wins in the first 9-ball game; Bayon edged Greece, 6-5, in the second 9-ball game, and Appleton downed Orcollo, 7-1, in the second 10-ball game.

Russia was actually leading, 6-1, against Pesek in the first 10-ball game but action was stopped after Appleton won the shocking second 10-ball game.

The team in the finals, the Filipinos beat Britain 2 (9-8), Czech Republic (6-1), Norway (6-2), Poland (4-2) and Russia (6-1) to avenge a similar shutdown with Britain.

The Britons downed Norway (5-1), got eliminated by Sweden (4-2), before shocking host-nation-favorite Germany (6-4) and Greece (4-2).



NEW Orleans defender and MVP Sean Payton (left) shake hands with Indianapolis quarterback Peyton Manning (right) as Saints recover back to back Peyton carries as they capped pass for a touchdown. AP

Saints clinch first NFL title

Foil Colts' Super Bowl dream

MIAMI—THE NEW ORLEANS SAINTS completed their long-awaited transformation from chumps to champions by dethroning the Indianapolis Colts, 31-17, in the Super Bowl on Sunday to claim their first NFL title.

Saints quarterback Drew Brees completed 32 of 39 passes for 288 yards and two touchdowns as he was drafted the Colts' Peyton Manning to help the Saints fight back from a 10-point first-quarter deficit.

A fourth Colts interception broke open a Dolphin Stadium school. Tracy Porter picked off a blooming pass with just over three minutes left and raced 74 yards for a score to give the Saints a 31-17 lead.

"We just believed in ourselves," said Brees. "We knew we had an entire city, maybe an entire country behind us. We're thrilled it was all meant to be. It was destiny. Islands Cats may never read."

The Saints have been a lay of hope for beleaguered New Orleans since 2005 when Hurricane Katrina slammed the Gulf Coast, leaving death and destruction in its wake.

New Orleans had looked shellshocked so far as their first Super Bowl as Indianapolis took a 10-0 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Garrett Hartley however, kicked two of his three field goals in the second quarter and although they trailed 10-6 at the half, the Saints never look in business.

A 36-yard receiving pass from Brees to Pierre Thomas gave the Saints a 13-10 lead in the third quarter and the confidence they could actually win the game.

Manning, who was hoping to guide the Colts to their second Super Bowl crown in the last four seasons, finished with 31 completions in 45 attempts for 333 yards, one touchdown and one very costly interception.

The Colts' last gasp expired with 66 seconds of the game left when Manning's pass slipped through the hands of Reggie Wayne in the end zone, giving the Saints their first title to their nearly moribund 43-year history.

Reuters

Magic move past rival Celtics

BOSTON—THE ORLANDO MAGIC dominated the third quarter to clinch a 96-88 comeback victory on Sunday over Boston, moving ahead of the Celtics and into second place in the Eastern Conference.

Vince Carter scored a team-high 29 points and Dwight Howard had 16 and 13 rebounds to lead the charge for the Magic, who enjoyed a 19-0 run to the third to nine a nine-point deficit into a 79-60 lead behind a barrage of three-pointers.

Boston held a 51-49 lead at halftime but faltered to lose their first in four games.

Rajon Rondo paced the Celtics with 17 points, nine assists and eight rebounds. Paul Pierce returned from a two-game absence due to an ankle injury to finish with 13 points.

In the fourth and final meeting between the teams that faced in last year's postseason—a best-of-seven series won by the Magic, 4-3—Orlando prevailed against Boston for the third time this season.

The Magic (34-17) fell behind in the second quarter and had to battle on to the fourth when the Celtics stunned a 17-point deficit to just five with 43 seconds left.

"Five more minutes and they probably would have got the win," Howard said.

"We knew we play hard for 48 minutes and we can't give up big leads like we did today. Thankfully, we were able to grind out the win."

At Toronto, Chris Bosh had 38 points and 13 rebounds, and Andrea Bargnani scored 22 points as Toronto extended Sacramento's losing streak to six games, 115-106. Reuters, AP

ORLANDO'S Vince Carter grabs a rebound in front of Boston's Kevin Garnett. AP

Gilas takes a look at 2 ex-PBA imports

By Jose Mavero

TWO FORMER PHILIPPINE BASKETball association imports are scheduled to try out for the Smart Gilas national team.

Jamel Watkins, who played for the defunct Shell Turbochargers and Magnolia Beverage Masters in the PBA, is arriving next week after Smart Gilas team manager Frankie Lim arranged a three-day tryout for the 6-foot-10 gentleman.

Watkins, 32, suited for the Saitama Dragons in the Chinese Basketball League and shunned national figures of 13.9 points, 10.1 rebounds and 2.7 blocks in the season 2009-2010 season.

After taking a close look at Watkins, a former Georgetown Hoyas standout who never saw action in the NBA, RP coach Rajko Toroman will fly to the United States on Feb. 15 to scout 7-footer Rod Benson in the NBA Development League (D-League).

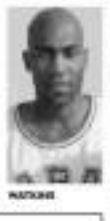
Benson, 26, played for Rod Bull in the 2006 and runs part of the 2008 NBA champions Miami Heat.

In 30 games with the Iowa Energy in the D-League, Benson averaged 13.6 points and 8.9 rebounds.

Toroman also hopes to scout Courtney Sims, a 6-11 power forward who had a brief stint with the Golden State Warriors in the 2007-2008 NBA season.

"I will look at these players and evaluate them before we make a decision," said Toroman, who is hard-pressed to get the right candidates for naturalization after two unsuccessful attempts.

Former NBA prospect CJ Giles and 6-11 Jamal Sampson failed to meet expectations and had to be dropped from the roster.


WATKINS

PBL: Life goes on

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Sev Sarmenta

AFTER MEETING OF WAITING, THE PHILippine Basketball League finally opens its first tournament for 2010 on Feb. 16.

The PBL, post-collegiate season, usually held in November, had traditionally been one of the most eagerly awaited by fans who want to check whether the school stars would play and what unusual combinations or team-ups would happen.

However, due to the departure or leaves of absence of some teams for a variety of reasons, the PBL struggled this year to gather a viable number of squads for a competitive commission.

Purple PBL teams like Harbour Centre, Jiapiz and league pioneer San Miguel were fortunate, considering that they were lucky enough for even a short conference like the five-team version it had before the collegiate season opened last year.

* * *

PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad, now on his 10th year as the helm, revealed that he even contemplated ending the league's run.

"Yes, it was rough," Trinidad reveals. "Because it came to a point where I was all set to recommend to the PBL Board that we just close shop as it was surely impossible to get more than still very few teams. The perks are attractive as well, like exposure that is quite prevalent given television and print coverage.

So it was just a matter of time when the PBL would get enough teams.

Baptista Trinidad, "It was just until the end of January when we were able to get three more teams—Actoz, Agri-Venture and Fern C...on join the 2010 tournaments. The good thing is that there are signs that we're coming to the PBL, which is good enough for me."

* * *

The new squads will join the two teams each from National Laboratories and Asia Brewery and Eastbell. Eight teams should be more than enough to give fans their dose of amateur basketball and see how the collegiate stars mix it up in a different competitive setting.

Trinidad is optimistic that the upcoming tournaments will be successful.

"I expect excited players to get into the playing arena. It's been almost eight months since the PBL played its last official game.

"From a league standpoint, there is tremendous pressure to show the opening ceremonies that the PBL can survive the latest crisis. But as the starting gun, I think every action creates an opportunity."

SPORTSWATCH

Elorde, Pacquiao celebrate milestones

BEFORE MANNY PACQUIAO EMBRACING GLORY, THERE WAS GABRIEL "Flash" Elorde.

Recognized as one of the world's longest-reigning junior lightweight titlist ever, Elorde died at 49 and did not see Pacquiao emerge as the only boxer to win seven world titles in as many weight divisions.

But calling the Philippines as the sporting city, Elorde, who held the crown for seven years and three months in the '50s, and Pacquiao, acknowledged as pound-for-pound king, will be honored tonight at the 15th Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Boxing Awards—Banquet of Champions on March 25 at the Ayalaland Taal at Sofitel Hotel.

Elorde won the title via a seventh-round knockout of Israel Gomez on March 16, 1960 at the Araneta Coliseum. From there he defended the title 13 times. He was inducted into boxing's Hall of Fame in 1983.

This year also marks the 25th death anniversary and 75th birth anniversary of Elorde.

Miriam, CSA tossers share WVL lead

MIRIAM AND CSA KEEP ON HAVING SOMETHING THEIR RESPECtive heads in common but for varying reasons. Both schools could in the volleyball members (competitive division of the MH Women's Volleyball League) at the Santa Rosa Christian College over the weekend.

The CSA girls subdued Phils. Angels, 25-4, 25-7, while Miriam spiked Makati School of Saint Anthony, 29-14, 25-2.

Pearl Rosanell also posted 10 points for CSA. Mahrabanna Almorgan, 25-8, 25-15, and Immaculate Heart of Mary, 25-11, 25-12—to complete a sweep of their five Group C rivals in the high school division somersault group.

High school Championships: St. Theresa's College d. PMI (JUNIOR, 25-13, 25-23, 25-14; SENIOR, 25-17, 25-20, 25-21; and NSC-Nabunga d. Saint Pedro Poveda College, 25-13, 25-10.

Antonio hosts NCA derby, fields two entries

ANTONIO ANTONIO KEEPS TODAY'S NCA 5-COCK DERBY AT THE Pramis Center in Pasig City where he will have an entire Sagupaan Combination and Bloodgang Pinoy Mix.

The premium derby winner, Sweet Style Derby 02, will also see action in the Sagupaan Combination sponsored derby along with Tommy Chua and Boong Ines Cruz's Goldspeed, Mario Villarosa's Phoenix, Pete Sison's Salvation, Tata Pete Sarmiento, Jun Soriano, Wayne Khan Regalado and Team Sagupaan and Erwin Carreon.

Former governor Joe Tanseco, Pres. Jojo Arroyo, the WTU Group of Makati, Gov. Rep. Vice Gov. Al Magnaye, Steve Stephenson, Danny Stone, Arman and Marvin Santos, Rene Martinez, Tio de Guzman, Sonny Roman, Rudy Albano, Jimmy Ang and Eric Ines Fores are also trying.

St. Theresa's QC alumni hold golf tourney

THE ST. THERESA'S COLLEGE (QUEZON CITY) ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION (STCEDAA) is holding its 1st Balay Amazonia golf tournament that seeks to bring together avid golfers and Theresian alumnae at the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Course in Quezon City.

Tee-off time from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. Entry fee is P5,000. Tournament proceeds will go to the construction of overnight association members.

CHAMPS John Pupa (second from left) and King Enchenette with Alabang presidents Dr. Boy Villareal (right) and Mango Tee chair Cokey Concillado.

Xerez-Burgos, Ilagan rule Mango Tee

THE TEAMS OF JOSE BURGOS-ISIDRO Raul Bagon and John Papa-King Enchenette claimed the top places in the 20th Mango Tee member-guest tournament on Sunday at the plush Alabang Country Club course.

Xerez-Burgos Ilagan posted rounds of 69-75-144 and the overall team title while Papa and Enchenette scoring 69-87-156, topping Tommy Manotoc-Jobbin Carbo by a stroke point for the low gross crown in the event co-presented by Imari and Philippine Shell.

But Alabang member Juan "Boy" Ilas, Asia and guest participant Bob Labrador were home with the biggest prizes as they drove home newly launched Mitsubishi Lancer GX sedans after scoring aces on separate holes.

Labrador also won a Club Car while Ilas was received an extra P100,000 cash and a new motorcycle.

Division overall honours were to Rudy Zapanta-Julius Zapanta in Class A, Ramon Garcia-Mario Bautista in Class B, Jose Leonard Enchenette to Class C and Reynaldo Empleo-Jacob Arcilla-Jr. in Class D.

Division low gross titles went to Manotoc-Carbo in Class A, Bert Cuna-Owen Polo in Class B, Jamel Bhargava-Arnold Dizon in Class C and Jose Antonio Mapa-Mike Mapa in Class D.

Alabang president Dr. Boy Villareal and Mango Tee chair Cokey Concillado were joined by Shell president Ed Chua in handing out the awards.

Papa and Enchenette entered the final round six points ahead of Manotoc-Carbo but still had to grind it out. Regulation pars on the 18th hole secured the win for them.

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DID YOU KNOW

ABOUT 55 percent of the household population in Manila were of voting age in 2007. Of those aged 18 and above, 51.8 percent were females and 48.1 percent were males.
Cyrill L. Bonalbello, Inquirer Research

6/49 jackpot to hit P165 million

By Julie M. Aurelio

DON'T PUT IT OFF UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE—not if you want to avoid those long lines.

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) yesterday reminded the public to place their bets early for tonight's 6/49 Super Lotto draw in which the jackpot is expected to reach P165 million.

PCSO spokesperson Dr. Larry Cedro said no one guessed the winning number combination of 1-27-30-35-34-25 in Sunday night's draw which had a jackpot prize of over P153 million.

However, 120,717 players won more than P22 million in consolation prizes after they got three or five of the numbers right.

Drawn for the 6/49 Super Lotto are now held thrice a week—on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Thursdays—because of the game's immense popularity, Cedro added.

More bets

"We expect more bettors to queue as bets cutoffs are no advance sale betting public is due up early as the first bets would make it before cutoff time at 9 p.m.," he said.

The jackpot for the 6/49 Super Lotto breached the P100 million mark for the first time this year on Jan. 21 with Cedro saying that the number of bettors tried to cutoff as the prize gets bigger.

"Our sales go up as the prize exceeds P100 million because the bettors are interested in winning the jackpot so this is good for our charity projects," he said.

Early this month, a delivery boy from Davao City claimed the P131 million in wins after he bested P69 on the winning number combination in the last 6/49 Super Lotto draw held for 2009.

Lotto winners have a year to claim their prize although they should ensure that their tickets remain in good condition.

Last year, the prize for the 6/49 Super Lotto draw breached the P100 million mark four times.

Record high

In February 2009, two bettors from the cities of Pasig and Caloocan shared the PCSO's biggest ever lotto prize—a whopping P347 million.

Just a few months later, two winners from Sta. Maria, Bulacan and Pateros grabbed the winning combination to split a jackpot of P108 million.

Then in September, a 44-year-old taxi driver with three children bagged a P130.4 million jackpot with a bet of only P60.

The second biggest Super Lotto jackpot was won by a 61-year-old construction worker from Novaliches, Quezon City in April 2008.

He won home P120 million richer.

THE TRANSFORMERS
A truck designed to look like Optimus Prime, the head of the Autobots in the movie "Transformers" will ferry the saviors of Sen. Richard Gordon, who is running for president, and his running mate, Bayani Fernando, in their sorties in the campaign for national posts kicked off today. Gordon and Fernando have branded themselves the "Transformers."

MMDA revives ban vs trikes, pedicabs on major roads

By Nitz Calleja

METROPOLITAN MANILA DEvelopment Authority (MMDA) Chair Oscar Inocencio yesterday ordered anew the implementation of an ordinance banning pedicabs and tricycles from major thoroughfares in Metro Manila.

Inocencio gave the order after he spotted a lot of tricycles in several parts of Edsa, Commonwealth and Kalayaan avenues.

Following an executive meeting with top MMDA officials, Inocencio instructed the agency's Traffic Operations Center (TOC) to form teams that would go after pedicab and tricycle drivers operating outside their routes.

At the same time, he ordered the TOC to strictly implement the ban even in areas where local governments officials had issued a non-interference on the ordinance's implementation.

Inocencio said that the permits granted by local officials only allow tricycle and pedicab drivers to operate on local streets confined to inside barangays.

He added that these vehicles not only slow down traffic but also put the lives of their drivers and passengers in unnecessary danger.

"They know that they are banned from driving [on] major thoroughfares. If we have to be harsh on them, then so be it if this is the only way to ensure their safety," Inocencio said.

Metro Manila Council Ordinance No. 6 was passed by 17 of the metropolis' mayors during the term of then MMDA Chair Jejomar Binay in 1996.

It imposes a P500 fine and imprisonment of up to 10 days on violators.

Election fever heats up in Caloocan

By Beverly T. Mativiad

WITH THE START OF THE campaign period for local candidates just a few weeks away, things have begun to heat up in the political arena in Caloocan City.

Former Mayor Iyan "Baby" Asistio—who is aiming to reclaim his old post in the May elections—will go in the Caloocan Regional Trial Court (RTC) today to appeal a lower court's decision which excludes him from the list of the city's qualified voters.

"I am on five-sixth of the line. I cannot allow a corrupt judge to disenfranchise me. I will file my appeal at the RTC," Asistio told the Inquirer over the phone.

Earlier, Judge Arthur O. Maldinguis of the Caloocan Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 52 ordered the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to remove Asistio's name from the list of the city's permanent voters, saying the former official was not a Caloocan resident.

In a 14-page decision, Maldinguis said that Asistio never drew a non-existent address in his certificate of candidacy (COC).

The petition to strike Asistio's name off the list of voters was filed by incumbent Mayor Enrique Echiverri, who is running for reelection.

Echiverri had said that in his Jan. 26 petition that Asistio had given a fake address in his COC.

Asistio, meanwhile, claimed that Echiverri stood as a godfather at Maldinguis's wedding.

Insisted Echiverri said: "I am not in any manner related to [Maldinguis]. We are not even schoolmates."

"My father was mayor of Caloocan for 20 years, my brother was mayor here for 17 years, I was a congressman of Caloocan for 12 years, and I voted here in the last three elections. I don't know why all of a sudden I'm not from here," Asistio said.

A separate disqualification case filed by Echiverri against Asistio is pending with the Comelec.

Meanwhile, Jonalyn Sabellano, Comelec election officer for the city's second district, said that despite no order from the court to remove Asistio's name from the list of voters, the poll body would not disqualify him just yet from the mayoralty race.

Only a ruling on the disqualification case filed against him by Echiverri with the Comelec would move to prohibit him from running in the May elections, Sabellano added.

ALL SET
Bright red lanterns decorate the streets of downtown Binondo, Manila, in preparation for the start of the Chinese New Year on Feb. 14.

Bad news for smokers: You can't light up in Muntinlupa

By Miko Morales

THE MUNTINLUPA CITY GOVernment has imposed a ban on smoking in all public places and the sale of tobacco products to minors.

Mayor Aldrin San Pedro recently signed the ordinance which prohibits smoking in all establishments, government offices and public utility vehicles, making it the second city in the country to enforce a ban for this year.

Ordinance 10-118, authored by Councilor Ma. Lutes Echavez, places restrictions on tobacco use among minors while designating smoking areas in establishments for people who don't kick the habit.

Students caught outside designated smoking areas, as well as business establishments who fail to post notices about the smoking ban, face a fine ranging from P500 to P10,000. Their business permits can also be revoked upon the discretion of city hall.

The ordinance will take effect after 60 days to give local officials enough time to inform residents and allow businesses and offices to put up smoking areas.

Last month, the Davao City government outlawed a smoking ban in the area, a move that earned praises from the international anti-smoking community.

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4 sentenced to jail for killing tanod

By DJ Yap

FOUR MEN WERE SENTENCED to up to 20 years in jail for beating a barangay watchman to death after he tried to pacify them while they were fighting with another group seven years ago in Pasig City.

Judge Abraham Borreta of the Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 156 found Mark Anthony Dominguez, Felipe Enriquez, Rolando Tuazon and Glen Tuazon guilty of killing Delfin Delfinado in 2003.

In a 14-page decision promulgated on Jan. 28, the court also ordered the four to pay the victim's family P1,200,000, representing the loss of income resulting from his death, as well as P50,000 in civil indemnity and P50,000 in actual damages.

Court records showed that Ordinario, a barangay "tanod" and driver, intervened in a fight between two groups of men at the bureau compound in Maybunga at about 12:30 p.m. on Aug. 31, 2003.

On one side were Jerry Jovellanos and Apolonio Macaraeg, while on the other were William Arabit and the two Tuazons, who are father and son.

Based on the testimony of Ordinario's brother Rolando, the victim had managed to pacify the group, prompting the exit of Arabit's group. But the quarrel continued after 15 minutes when Arabit and the two Tuazons, joined by Enriquez and Dominguez, returned to the scene.

When Arabit's group returned, Ordinario, Macaraeg and Tolentino fled. Ordinario was hiding behind a parked jeepney when Glen Tuazon threw a stone at him, hitting him on the head. He tripped but managed to stand up before Arabit's group caught up with him.

Rolando said Arabit hit his brother on the head with a baseball bat, then Dominguez hit him with a steel pipe. At one point, Arabit lifted a wooden bench and dropped it on the victim. Glen Tuazon also dropped a hollow block on Ordinario's nape, while Enriquez punched him repeatedly.

The eyewitness told the court that the hearing went on for about 15 to 20 minutes. A barangay mobile enabled Delfinado, who was already in a coma one week, to the Pasig City General Hospital, but he died three days later, court records showed.

Arabit was also charged in court but remains at large.

In his decision, Borreta said he found Rolando's eyewitness account to be more credible than the individual testimonies of the four accused who each presented an alibi as their defense.

Fugitive Ping Lacson likely wearing a wig

YOU DON'T SEE HIGHWAY patrol cops on the highways anymore.

You don't see them on Edsa either.

That's the reason there are many accidents on our highways and on Edsa (caused by recklessness or drunken drivers).

I don't have the figures of deaths caused by accidents on our highways, but I was told they're very high.

Accidents on our highways happen because there are no policemen enforcing rules against speeding and overloading.

Of what are any members of the Philippine National Police (PNP) (Highway Patrol Group)?

* * *

You only see PNP traffic control cops flagging down speeding drivers and overloaded passenger vehicles when their chief or other top police officials from Camp Crame are coming to visit them in their city or town.

They collect money from erring drivers so their superior will have a "good time" in the city or town.

That's the only use of PNP traffic control cops.

* * *

Why do stalled vehicles on highways use boxes or branches of trees to forewarn oncoming motorists or drivers when they should be using an emergency warning device (EWD)?

There are two kinds of EWD which are triangular in shape. One is yellow; the other one red.

The yellow EWD is placed about 50 meters from the stalled vehicle, while the red one is placed 25 meters away to warn oncoming drivers to slow down or change lanes.

All vehicles are required to have EWDs in their compartments.

Why doesn't the PNP traffic control group apprehend drivers who don't use EWDs when their vehicles stall?

The reason is simple: the PNP traffic control group cops are more concerned on the highways if they're seen or ill.

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

* * *

My Old Man was an original member of the traffic control (Traskom) unit of the defunct Philippine Constabulary (PC).

Traskom eventually became the Constabulary Highway Patrol Group (CHPG) which, in its later years, became notorious for because some of its members were allegedly in cahoots with car thieves.

At the time my father, a captain, was with the PC Traskom (1957-1962), there were few drunks on the highways because the unit was very strict in enforcing traffic rules against speeding and overloading.

I remember that my father's "special team" was assigned at Highway 54, which is now Edsa.

Why are there so many police traffic cops patrolling Edsa?

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has its traffic enforcement, Edsa, but they're like scarecrows in a rice field! Full of pesky birds—useless.

The entire personnel of the PNP traffic control group should be reassigned and replaced by new faces.

Strict enforcement of traffic rules by a new breed of traffic enforcers will bring down the accident-related death toll on our highways.

* * *

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) says it may be hard to recognize Sen. Ping Lacson, who is now a fugitive of justice, because he's probably wearing a moustache or wig.

I don't think Ping will wear a moustache.

More likely, he'll wear a wig because it becomes less.

Hehehe!

METROBRIEFS

Pedicab driver stabbed dead

A 45-YEAR-OLD pedicab driver was killed when he was attacked by a knife-wielding foe while he was attending a wake on Sunday night in Manila. Ferdinand Mayuk, a resident of San Sebastian Street, Barangay 777 Zone 82 in Tondo, was declared dead on arrival by attending doctors of the Tondo General Hospital from multiple stab wounds. PO3 Jonathan Bautista of the Manila Police District homicide section said the stabbing incident took place at around 10 p.m. on Sunday in Tondo where a wake was being held. Bautista said Mayuk was gambling with other people at the wake when a man known only as "Bill" approached him from behind and attacked him with a knife. Bill then fled while the badly injured pedicab driver was rushed to the nearest hospital. Bautista said that both men had been involved in a fight several years back and bore a grudge against each other. Jaimielyn I. Arcinas

Judge inhibits self from Aguilar case

A BULACAN City trial judge has formally inhibited himself from handling the dismissal of perjury case filed against Marlene Aguilar in order to remove any doubt or suspicion of bias on his part. In a three-page order released yesterday afternoon, Judge Voltaire Agas of the Quezon City Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 34 said he was disqualifying the case after the prosecution sought his withdraw. "In order to spare this court from further unwarranted and baseless opinions that may be hurled against and cause the erosion of people's faith in the court, the undersigned judge hereby inhibits himself from further hearing this case," he said. The court has forwarded the case records to the MTC Office of the Clerk of Court. Court employees said the case was set to be re-raffled to another court on Thursday, Feb.11. Assistant City Prosecutor Gloria Gacilos-Cruz asked Agas to reconsider himself from the case after the judge disclosed that his son is the lawyer of the defense. Ay thus still not happening belonged to the same fraternity in law school. Jubelle Aurelio

Skyway opens more lanes

WITH the completion of the columns for the Skyway Stage 3 project, the road lanes between Bicutan and Alabang, some of which were closed during the construction, have been restored to three standard lanes since the start of the year. Project developer Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp., main contractor D.M. Consunji Inc., and the project's traffic manager, Skyway O&M Corp., worked hand in hand to finish the columns ahead of the target date of May to ease traffic in the area and offer relief to motorists. The Skyway Stage 3 project involves the construction of a 5.86-kilometer elevated toll road from Bicutan to Alabang that will extend the existing 8.5 km Buendia-Bicutan Skyway by May 2011.

Fr. Jose Luis Arrieta, 75

RR. JOSE Luis Arrieta, SPM Cap., former rector of Lourdes School Quezon City (LSQC) and Lourdes School Mandaluyong (LSM), died at 1:25 a.m. yesterday at Cardinal Santos Medical Center. He was 75. Known to Lourdes School students as Father Bonito, he also served as director of St. Anthony School in Singalong, Manila. Following his stint as high school director and principal, he was appointed rector of LSQC, where he set up a free evening class for poor students. He was transferred to LSM where he served as rector from 1971-1975. He also headed the St. Vincent de Paula Parish in Mandaluyong and National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Quezon City. His body lies at the Sto. Tomas de Villa Church on Bonifacio Street near Dapitan, Cubao and Maysan streets. All LSQC and LSM alumni are invited to a Mass in his honor at the parish church at 7:30 p.m. today. On Wednesday, his remains will be transferred to Lipa, Batangas, for burial.

15th PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL hotair BALLOON FIESTA

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DAY 1 FEBRUARY 11, 2010 THURSDAY

DAY 2 FEBRUARY 12, 2010 FRIDAY

DAY 3 FEBRUARY 13, 2010 SATURDAY

DAY 4 FEBRUARY 14, 2010 SUNDAY

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Too many hairdressers, cooks: Australia tightens migration rules

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA—Australia tightened its migration rules Monday in favor of English-speaking and professionals, saying the country has been swamping too many hairdressers and cooks and not enough doctors and engineers.

Immigration minister Chris Evans blamed the overrepresentation of lower-skilled immigrants on a system put in place by Prime Minister John Howard, whose government lost power in 2007 elections.

"Under the Howard government, we had a lot of hairdressers coming through," Evans told reporters. "We were taking in hairdressers from overseas in front of tradesmen and nurses—it didn't make any sense."

The new rules will favor applicants who already have job offers over those who merely have qualifications or who are studying. The measures are expected to dampen enrollment in Australian colleges by foreign students hoping to settle in the country.

Students of foreign students established in Australian colleges exploded in 2001, when the government changed immigration rules to allow them to apply for permanent residency while studying. Until then, skilled workers had to apply offshore for visas to fill jobs from a list of more than 100 trades and professions that were suffering shortages in Australia.

Australia continues to have a shortage of accountants, partly because many of the 40,000 accountants who immigrated in the past five years did not have the professional or language skills to find work, Evans said.

"You've got to say if they don't have the English language skills, don't have the trade skills and can't get a job, then really they should not be eligible for permanent residency," Evans said.

The new policy will favor applicants who score highly in an English language test. Moreover, immigrant members in certain jobs could be capped for the first time. The government has also identified which jobs.

Because of the higher standards and a revised list of which skilled workers are in short supply, 20,000 visa applications will be scrapped and their applications for nearly 14 million Australian dollars ($12 million) refunded, he said.

The new list will be made public mid-year and focus on high-skill professions.

Foreign student numbers in Australia have gone from 150,000 in 2002 to almost 400,000 last year, with India recently overtaking China as the largest source of applicants. AP

LALAISA Chinchilla gives a thumbs-up in San José after winning the general elections on Feb. 7. AFP

Costa Ricans elect 1st woman president

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA—COSTA Ricans have elected their first woman president as the ruling party candidate won in a landslide after campaigning to continue free weather policies in Central America's most stable nation.

With most of the votes from Sunday's election counted, Laura Chinchilla held a 21-point lead over her closest rival. Her 47-percent share of the vote was well beyond the 40 percent needed to avoid a run-off.

The 50-year-old protégé of the current president, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Oscar Arias, promised to pursue the same economic policies that recently brought the country into a trade pact with the United States and spread commerce with China.

"Today we are making history," said Chinchilla, who will be the fifth Latin American woman to serve as president when she takes office in May. "For Costa Rican people have given me their confidence, and I will not betray it."

The closest contender, Otton Solís of the Citizens Action Party, got 25 percent of the votes. He said the other main rival, Libertarian Otto Guevara, quickly conceded defeat.

It was unclear, however, whether Chinchilla's National Liberation Party would gain a majority in Congress.

Chinchilla, the mother of a teenage son, is a social conservative who opposes abortion and gay marriage. She appealed both to Costa Ricans seeking a fresh face and those reluctant to risk the unknown.

As a female president, she would follow an increasingly common trend in many Latin American countries. Nicaragua, Panama, Chile and Argentina have all elected women as presidents. AP

Britain plans to reduce flow of international students

LONDON—BRITAIN POLL DE-mockingly began to tighten its border controls that could reduce the flow of people into and out the country as students by tens of thousands a year.

The new rules will apply to all applicants from outside the European Union, including the United States. But the primary focus appeared likely to be the Indian subcontinent, a major source in recent years of students coming to the United Kingdom.

The rapid rise in immigration, and the strain it has imposed on public services like education, medical care and the welfare system, promises to be a major issue in a general election that must be held before June. The ruling Labor Party has come under growing pressure from the opposition parties—in particular the Conservatives, who are leading in pre-election polls—to defend policies that have brought more than a million foreigners to the country since the party took power in 1997.

Home Secretary Alan Johnson, responsible for overseeing domestic security, said in a BBC interview that new curbs would be taken not to damage "a major part of the British economy," the $6 billion to $9.750 billion a year generated by the education of foreign students here. But in a statement, Johnson said that "those who are not seriously interested in coming here to study, but come primarily to work, should be in no doubt: that we will come down hard on those that flout the rules."

The restrictions will include a requirement that students speak English well enough to pass British high school exams, not just the "beginner's English" required previously. Applicants for courses lasting less than six months will no longer be allowed to bring family members with them, and the dependents of students on courses not leading to degrees will be limited from working. Colleges will be more tightly monitored to eliminate the kind of fake institutions that one critic described last year as "a couple of people above a chip shop." AFP

Doctor finally faces charge in Jackson death

LOS ANGELES—DR. CONRAD MURRAY, who has been trying to surrender to authorities for a week, will likely have his chance Monday with prosecutors saying they will file a charge in the death of Michael Jackson.

A district attorney's spokesperson did not name the doctor or say what the charge will be but Murray's lawyer have said they expect a single charge of involuntary manslaughter against the man who administered an anesthetic to the singer before he died.

As the last person to see Jackson alive, Murray has been the focal point of a police investigation since Jackson died last June 25 at age 50. Murray acknowledged that he administered the hospital anesthetic propofol and other sedatives as Jackson, a chronic insomniac, struggled to sleep.

Murray had been hired as the performer's personal physician as he prepared for a massive comeback concert in London. AP

China finds more tainted milk

BEIJING—CHINA HAS FOUND another 170 tons of tainted milk powder in an emergency crackdown that has seen nearly a thousand more dairy products discovered in the country's 2008 milk scandal seen repackaged for sale instead of destroyed.

The growing number of cases in recent weeks challenges the government's earlier promise to overhaul its regulatory system to find any hundreds of thousands of children in that wrecked some sickened by milk products tainted with an industrial chemical, by now established.

Already, tainted milk products have recently emerged in China's largest city, Shanghai, and in the provinces of Shaanxi, Shandong, Liaoning, Guizhou, Jilin and Hebei.

In the latest discovery, officials recalled more than 170 tons of milk powder tainted by the industrial chemical melamine and closed two dairy companies in the northern region of Hengyan, the China Daily newspaper reported Monday.

The report said officials seized 72 tons of the powder but were still looking for the rest, which had been repackaged by the Ningxia Yuntian Dairy Co. Ltd. and sold in factories to the neighboring region of Inner Mongolia and the bustling southern provinces of Guangdong and Fujian.

Dairy suppliers in the past have been accused of adding melamine, which is high in nitrogen, to watered-down milk to make it appear protein-rich in quality tests that measure nitrogen.

The report said the tainted powder should have been destroyed in the 2008 scandal, and that Ningxia Yuntian Dairy got it from an unnamed company in Jilin province. AP

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WORLD BRIEFS

US East Coast digs out as other snowstorms loom

ASHSWOODS—Road crews, power company workers and plain old homeowners with shovels struggled to gleaming sunshine on Sunday to clean up from a weekend of record snowfall here, but they faced little hope of returning to normalcy soon because five or more inches were forecast within days. "This is going to be a weeklong mop-up," said Joan Morris, a spokesperson for the Virginia Department of Transportation. Noting that some of northern Virginia's sprawling residential subdivisions were still waist-deep in snow, Morris said the cleanup would not be completed by Monday, which she optimistic "last sign-to-work day." Even then, officials were looking over two forecasts that predicted more snow on Tuesday. One called for five to 10 additional inches, the other for six to 12. AFP

Anwar moves to disqualify sodomy trial judge

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim moved Monday to have the judge in his sodomy trial disqualified, contending he had overheard his remarks made outside the trial, which Anwar says is a plot to end his political career. Anger last week with a graphic testimony from 26-year-old former aide Mohamad Saiful Bukhari Azlan who accuses Anwar of sodomizing him. Defense lawyers objected Friday when Harian Metro, a Malay-language daily linked to the government, ran photographs of the court's closed door visit to the upscale apartment where the sexual encounter allegedly took place. Judge Mohamad Zabidin Diah refused to postpone the trial, but the daily says the photographs, as well as an earlier headline that said "Bid nothing in for sodomized again" which the defense said suggested they had up more than once. AFP

Americans held in Haiti say they were misled

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti—Divisions emerged within the group of 10 Americans jailed in Haiti on child abduction charges, with eight of them signing a note over the weekend saying that they had been misled by Laura Silsby, the leader of the group. "Laura wants to control," said the spokesman who handed out a statement for the eight. "We believe she was lying. We're afraid." The firefighting arms amid a shakeup in the legal representation of the Americans, who have been charged with trying to remove 33 Haitian children from the country without government permission. AFP

5 dead in blast at Connecticut power plant

A POWER plant under construction in central Connecticut exploded with the possible force of dual missile bombs as far as 200 miles away on Sunday as workers prepared roof and girder work. At least five people were killed and more than two dozen injured when a section of the plant collapsed and burned. AFP

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5	Post-Qualification	
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7	Signing of Contract	
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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Greco

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INQUIRER BREAKING NEWS: Meralco to implement 2-hour rotating brownouts in parts of Marikina, Manila, QC, Bulacan and Cavite due to outage at Sual power plant. National Grid Corp. has placed entire Luzon grid on red alert.

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Opposition leader claims victory in Ukraine election

KIEV, UKRAINE—THE OPPOSITION LEADER Viktor F. Yanukovich declared victory Sunday in presidential elections in Ukraine, claiming what appeared to be an unlikely comeback from his humiliating defeat in the 2004 Orange Revolution, when he was thwarted in a bombing frenzy ordered...

YANUKOVICH

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IN THIS ISSUE
- MetroPac units to consolidate hold on Meralco /B2
- PNB doubles profit to P2.2B /B4

Editor Raul G. Manuela • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

BPO sector generates $7.2B in revenues

Industry created 442,164 jobs as of end-2009

By Abigail L. Ho

THE BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING SECTOR continues to be the country's sunshine industry, generating more than $7.2 billion in revenues last year, a 19-percent increase from $6.1 billion in 2008.

In a presentation at the opening of the 30th e-Services Global Sourcing Conference and Exhibition yesterday, Business Processing Association of the Philippines executive director for information and research Gillian Joyce Monta said the sector also generated 442,164 new jobs last year, bringing the industry total to 442,164 employees.

"We had a very difficult last quarter of 2008 and early 2009, but recovery started to kick in in the second half [of 2009]. We expect that build-up within the first semester [of 2010]," she said.

Voice BPO, or the regular contact center operations, contributed the bulk of 2009 revenues at $5 billion, a 22-percent rise from year-ago figures. Coming in as second place was the back-office or non-voice BPO sector, which chalked up more than $1.3 billion in earnings, representing a 25-percent rise from the previous year.

In terms of employment, the call center sector also provided the most jobs last year at 280,000 people, followed by the back-office sector at 80,000, and information technology outsourcing at 35,300.

For this year, Vitria said the industry expected a rapid build-up within the first half as well as a greater diversity of service offerings. In terms of challenges, the BPO sector would have to contend with the negative perception issue that the country suffered abroad and the need to enforce

BPO SECTOR B2

91-day T-bill rate up slightly at 3.935%

By Reena F.W. Domingo

THE YIELD ON THE BENCHmark 91-day treasury bills went up 3.8 basis points to an average of 3.935 percent as the government showed some flexibility in the face of upward pressure on the cost of borrowing.

However, National Treasurer Roberto S. Tan said changes in interest rates were insignificant as these were less than 10 percent.

Tan said investors still showed their uncertainty about when monetary authorities would start tightening policy rates and whether the government is able to support another year of a large budget deficit.

Economic managers have said the deficit this year might reach P280 billion, almost the same as the expected P260 billion incurred in 2009.

Also, Tan said yesterday's auction indicated that there was much idle funds waiting to be invested.

"The market is now looking more to the short-term" financial instruments, he said.

Interest on the 182-day bills rose 3.5 basis points, but that for the 364-day issue went down 4.7 basis points.

The six-month debt paper now eats the government an average 4.2 percent while the year-long issue costs 4.62 percent.

Investors tendered a total of P24.65 billion or almost thrice the total offer of P8.3 billion worth of treasury bills.

Buyers offered a total of

91-DAY T-BILL RATE B2

MetroPac units to consolidate hold on Meralco

By Paolo G. Montecillo

QUELLING FEARS THAT IT MAY SACK out of the expensive purchase of a chunk of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the Manuel Pangilinan group on Monday is currently in talks with local banks to raise money for the acquired assets of two power companies, sale of shares, the company said in its disclosure.

Also, Philippine Telephone Corp. (PHIL) said it was in talks with sister firm Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) for the formation of a new holding company which would control the group's hold on Meralco.

MPIC, Piltel raise funds to buy additional 6.6% stake

MPIC and Piltel, which have a combined 34.7 percent stake in Meralco, had earlier agreed to buy another 6.6 percent of the power distributor from the Lopez-led First Pacific Holdings Corp. via a call option that expires on Feb. 28.

"Funding for these 6.6 percent Meralco shares have been agreed with a syndicate of banks and with [Hong Kong-based] First Pacific Co. Ltd., MPIC's principal shareholder, subject to the requisite board approvals and documentation," MPIC said in a disclosure.

This will enable MPIC to fund the acquisition of the 6.6-percent Meralco stake should it decide to exercise the call option, the company said.

Under the call option agreement, which was originally scheduled to end in Nov. 5 last year, MPIC would have the exclusive right to purchase additional Meralco stake from the Lopezes.

The strategic stake in Meralco under discussion is valued at P21.4 billion.

This will extend the Pangilinan group's position as the controlling blocholder in Meralco. Pangilinan bought Meralco shares last year to block San Miguel Corp. from increasing its stake in the country's largest power distributor. San Miguel, which has been diversifying from its core food and beverage businesses in heavy industries, planned to use Meralco's network of power lines as a launch pad for its own foray into the telecommunications sector.

The country's telecom industry is currently dominated by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Piltel's parent firm.

Piltel and MPIC said they were in the final stages of a plan to form a new holding firm that would hold their respective shares in Meralco.

"The terms of the reorganization are being finalized by MPIC and Piltel, and an announcement in this regard will be made shortly," Piltel disclosure said in identical disclosures. "Both parties are in the process of finalizing the required documentation and obtaining the necessary consents."

MPIC's share price remained unchanged at P9.24 a piece after yesterday's trading. Piltel shares were unchanged at P1.50 each.

Australian BPO company expands presence in RP

By Abigail L. Ho

AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS PROcess outsourcing firm Ambal Holdings group of companies has set up in MORONI Hill in Taguig City, the company's first major investment outside of its home country.

In a briefing yesterday, Ambal general manager of strategy Pedro Hadorn said the company had been in the country since 1996, but it was doing mainly transactional services that served only the Philippine markets.

Ambal's new McKinley Hill facility, he said, marked the company's expansion into high-value services, as well as in four-tier international markets for its Philippine operations.

"We have moved from transactional services to strategic services, which are higher value," he said at the 2010 e-Services Outsourcing Conference and Exhibition. "For the past five months, our new facility in McKinley Hill have been operating. It already employees, we plans to grow to 800 over the next three years."

In a separate interview, Ambal country manager Meg Ramoso said the McKinley Hill site would mainly serve accounts under Australia's Ambal Holdings.

Ramoso said the McKinley Hill site would mainly serve accounts under Australia's Ambal Holdings. The company is hired on the Australian Stock Exchange.

What's up on I-Remit

MARKET RIDER

Dem Somera

THE STOCK PRICE OF I-REMIT leapfrogged in November when it was allegedly being considered as an investment loop—along with two other companies (one of which have been featured in this column last time)—by the government-controlled fund management agency which was reportedly on the lookout for good stocks to engage growth-oriented companies, creating one of the modest technical run-up that could make one richer by as much as 6.6 percent in two days.

In particular, the shares of I-Remit broke above a sudden burst of market activity and spike in market price sensitivity in the second week of November, when only a month ago, I-Remit shares had been trading sideways at the average price of P11.00.

I-Remit's share price lingered at this level until the said news broke out on Nov. 11.

Even then, in the morning of Nov. 12, I-Remit shares opened at the usual price of P10.98. However, it climbed by as much as P5.46 at the back of growing volume, resulting to a price differential of P1.00 or 42 percent; a trading profit that was too good to be true for a day's work.

The next day, Nov. 13, all hell broke loose, so to speak. Volume rose by almost a thousand times of previous month's average daily volume. To be exact, volume ballooned to about 31 million shares equivalent to almost a third of the company's 203.8 percent reported free float level.

With that volume, I-Remit shares proceeded to soar all the way up to P7, allowing an 84 percent gross return in two days.

It's obvious, it's obviously wrong

But after that fantastic market run up, the market performance of I-Remit had turned to disappointed. Since then, its share price had been on a downtrend path much like that of a space rocket capsule in space.

Not being a heavenly body, it will not be for long that I-Remit will be subjected to Newton's law of gravity in of his Falling Bodies theory, which basically states that every object in the universe attracts every other object with a force directed along the line of centers for the two objects that is proportional to the product of their masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them.

Translation: the higher it is, the harder it will fall.

It hit its lowest price of P4.80 since the climb but managed to recover higher on its obviously deliberate effort to prop up its price by parties some suspect to be representing management interest; thus, closing unchanged at P5.

Looking back, the volume of transaction during the two days of market run-up was equivalent to no less than 6.5 percent of total outstanding shares. This was equivalent to almost the amount of equity stake the said government controlled fund manager, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) normally would take in a progressive investment risk.

This, in turn, reinforced the speculative claim that the business intent of the said government controlled fund manager, however, has not been satisfied. The obvious disappearance of momentum trading on I-Remit since then is cited as one strong reason to support such claim.

Momentum trading and real picking for value

To digress, I once agree that gains are the days of momentum trading. This method seems to have lost its relevance in the context of the current market situation. The name of the game now is value picking for fundamental value.

If you will notice, the market this year started strong on momentum trading. In the beginning of the year we had sudden burst of market activity on a host of speculative issues.

But if you will notice, their market plays died down as early as they started to the exceptional probability of one whose stock price has continued to defy Newton's law of gravity also can be seen in the case of Philippine Seven. Its share price is still

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Greenfield Development Corporation goes beyond mere mixed use development with Greenfield Regional Hub, which will house the regional center for CALABARZON

Greenfield Regional Hub to house CALABARZON's Regional Center

Today's real estate market has grown increasingly sophisticated, with a well-traveled audience of global citizens exposed to the best practices and most advanced developments in the field of urban planning and community development. Players in the industry have adapted to these needs by creating more holistic, integrated developments and master-planned communities.

Poised to become one of the leaders in this field, Greenfield Development Corporation has long been aware of the need to create complete, integrated cities. Their large-scale development projects, such as the notable redevelopment of the city of Santa Rosa in Laguna, which boasts a thriving network of commercial, industrial, residential, and institutional land uses, are consistently geared towards the bigger picture, the company's strength is not just in building one or two isolated structures, but building whole communities, and cities within the context of larger, global cities.

Late last year, Greenfield launched another ground-breaking project slated to be a key element in the development of one of the most promising regions of the country. The Greenfield Regional Hub, a 25-hectare property strategically located just off the South Luzon Expressway in Barangay Mayapang, Calamba City, Laguna, is designed as a complete city with low to medium density residential properties, offices, retail establishments, hotels, resorts, and convention facilities. More significantly, the Greenfield Regional Hub will be the location of the Regional Center for the CALABARZON administrative region, the central hub of all activities for Region IVA which consists of the cities and municipalities of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon.

The launch ceremony was graced by national and local officials and top company executives, including President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, Joaquin Chipeco, Jr., Calamba City Mayor, Severino Santos, NEDA Director and PDC Vice Chairman, Teresita Lazaro, Laguna Governor, Ulo Alberto, DENR Secretary, Justin Marc Chipeco, Laguna 2nd District Representative, Dominador Mondragon, Director of the Office of the Presidential Assistant for New Government Centers, Jeffrey Joseph Campos, Greenfield President and Chairman of the Board, Duane Alexander Santos, Greenfield Executive Vice President and General Manager, and other governors and congressmen from the region.

In addition to the unveiling of the site masterplan scale model, the launch was marked by a simple capsule-laying ceremony led by the President.

The 2-hectare portion of the development slated for the Regional Center will house an integrated series of government offices in a low density campus setting, with clustered buildings, open courtyards, and complete amenities. The integrated government center is envisioned to decentralize government functions and bring them directly to the responsible regions, thus decongesting the national capital region and empowering the regional constituents. Already at the forefront of regional development with its pioneering work in Santa Rosa, Greenfield is moving on to the next step, strengthening the partnership between the government and private sector as both further the region's bid to become Asia's premiere industrial hub.

In keeping with its masterplanned vision, the Greenfield Regional Hub will support this major civic and institutional complex with a full complement of commercial office buildings and regional business centers, retail developments, and residential projects, designed with Greenfield's trademark environmentally sound and technologically advanced practices.

PNB doubles profit to P2.2B

By Doris C. Dumlao

TYCOON LUCIO TAN'S PHILIPPINE National Bank doubled its net profit in 2009 on the back of higher earnings from lending and treasury businesses as well as improved asset quality and operating efficiency.

Going unaudited figures, PNB disclosed yesterday that its net income reached P2.2 billion last year, compared to P1.1 billion in 2008.

Net interest income grew 11 percent due to an expansion in its loan book, which was accompanied by only a modest 1 percent increase in interest expense, in turn due to an improved funding mix, low interest rates as well as 25 percent or P7.8 billion lower cost.

The bank's loans and receivables went up 18 percent or it participated either as lender or arranger in seven

2009 net interest income hits P7.8B

at corporate and public sector fund-raising deals such as in telecommunications, energy and infrastructure industries.

"Consumer loans also grew healthily with the active cross-selling of auto-, housing and multipurpose loans by the branches coupled with promotional campaigns," PNB reasoned.

Other operating income sources like trading and investment securities gains also significantly boosted profit in 2009. PNB slashed up 91.3 billion in net gains from trading and investment securities as a much worse-than-feared market environment—compared to 2008 when global markets were sent for by the US-epicentered global financial crunch—booted the mark-to-market valuation of treasury bills by investment.

Miscellaneous income also improved by 22 percent to contribute P1.9 billion to bank coffers as PNB booked higher gains from the sale of foreclosed properties. As such, total operating income went up by 23 percent.

The increase in earning assets was supported by a P15.5 billion or 7 percent expansion in deposit base to P218 billion. PNB sold P2.26 billion worth of two-year long-term negotiable certificates of deposits in March last year and likewise marshaled such core into US dollar peso time deposits as well as commercial savings and time deposits during the year.

Globe plans P3-B loan from local banks

By Paolo G. Montecillo

GLOBE TELECOM INC. MAY BORrow another P3 billion from local banks to supplement the company's budget requirements for the year.

But the company said it was unlikely to raise money by selling debt paper to retail investors this year as rising interest rates make bond deals more expensive than regular bank loans.

"Last year, we did it [bond deal] because we wanted to diversify our debt profile," said Alberto M. de Larrazabal, head of Globe's treasury unit.

In 2009, Globe was among many companies that chose to raise funds by floating bonds amid the downward pressure of the global financial crisis on share prices.

Globe was able to raise P6 billion from a domestic bond floats in the first half last year.

The official also said that last year, floating bonds were a better option for most companies given the low interest rates at the time.

"In [a]nutshell and most banks were also charging high interest rates then due to the uncertainties in the world's financial markets. Local investors, however, were more than willing to scoop up corporate debt paper for slightly lower yields.

"Last year, bank loans became very expensive, but now prices are down," he said.

"We might have to borrow a little bit more [this year ... probably in the first quarter. Maybe between P1 billion and P3 billion, [or so]."

The fresh funds will be on top of the P6 billion that Globe had borrowed this last year in prepare for this years expenses.

Last week, Globe said it planned to spend about P800 million this year. This was slightly lower than last year's capital expenditure of P1.6 billion. Despite the slight budget cut, the company plans to increase investments to strengthen its broadband business, which has been tagged as the industry growth area.

With 2.1 million mobile and 715,000 broadband Internet subscribers, Globe is the country's second-biggest telecommunications firm.

At the head is Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., whose mobile subsidiary Smart Communications Inc. has more than 44 million mobile phone subscribers and 1 million broadband Internet users.

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How to paddle and ride the 'thermal'

Text and photos by Anne A. Jamboro

SO YOU WANT TO FLY, huh?

Learn how to soar and conquer the skies at the Philippine Paragliding and Hang Gliding Association (PHGA) launches its basic paragliding course this February. Kick-starting the event is a talk and open forum about the sport at the B.G.H., Bonifacio High Street, The Fort, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.

"The reward in paragliding is the experience itself. It's like flying. If you are a bird up in the air that's not flapping its wings, that kind is using a ridge lift or thermal to stay aloft. The same principle applies to paragliding," said Ronald "Dodo" Raymundo, PHGA president.

Raymundo is a world champion paraglider and one of the country's pioneers in the sport. He is also a mountaineer and rock climber. He has joined the first few triathlon events in the country before earning his paraglider-rating, where he eventually discovered paragliding.

He took his course in paragliding in Bali, Indonesia, four years ago, where the sport is very popular. "World Bird, a paragliding school in Indonesia, the very first I think a business-hall event in every municipality," he said.

PREPARING the equipment

RANDELL Raymundo rides the Banahaw thermal.

Aviation sports

Paragliding is a form of aviation sports that uses a specially tailored wing to allow the pilot to fly without using an engine. Launching from hilltops, it makes use of the air rising up from the mountain (also called ridge lift or thermals) to keep the pilot aloft.

When hot air from the ground goes up it becomes dense, the air invisible elevator. That hot air is called thermal, he said. Paragliders, in their large parachute that's designed like the wing of a plane, must catch that lift. Or as more enthusiasts say ride that thermal.

The first quarter of the year is the best time to paraglide, Raymundo said, when the cool northeast monsoon wind (amihan) brings in a strong and stable air mass. This also explains why all wind sport events are held from January to March.

Paragliding is very close to walking, Raymundo said. He said useless, paddle 20 or so minutes to get to actual (name) and ride the wave for only a few seconds, before repeating the same pattern of paddling and lifting.

Paragliding involves several minutes walking up a hill/platform launching to fly. Depending on wind conditions, height and experience, flight takes anywhere from a few seconds to several hours (cross-country paragliding). Even experienced paragliders settle for a few seconds of flight when the conditions are not favorable.

Anyone can paraglide, said Raymundo, as long as they are physically fit—meaning able to walk up and down a mountain ridge and carry their equipment. It's not physically demanding as joining triathlons or other cardiovascular endurance sports, he said, but it's well-honed mental skirmish.

Course

The paragliding course will be conducted by visiting licensed instructor, Malaysian Snr Lt. Col. Basir Hj Abd. Rahman. Classroom sessions are anywhere from five to 10 days. Ground training is a bit easier than the actual flight, Raymundo said. Invitations who fail ground tests usually remain, well, grounded until they learn to perfect it. This is because students will be challenging gravity and negotiating the wind conditions once in flight. Like any sport, there are always risks involved.

Student paragliding will also be offered to those who just want the thrill of the experience. Just sit and enjoy the wind and view as the instructor pilots the ride. Since paragliding depends on the weather, schedules are flexible.

Training are ranges need Rds 10 in the Cavite-Laguna-Batangas area, Intercal in Rizal Highway Day, with a maximum of 20-30 minutes flights depending on wind conditions. Cost is P40 for the introductory plus P800 for non-PHGA members. An additional P1,000 for those who opt for a three-minute edited video taken from cameras located on the wing and helmet.

Basic Paragliding course is from 8:30-5:, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Cost is $450 plus P1,000 for non-PHGA members. Course includes theories and ground-handling training at Carmona fly site, Batangas Carmona, Cavite, one to two tandem rides and two to three solo flying, training and flying equipment, training notes and certificate. Additional P5,000 for solo/first-time rides, and $50 for the certification card. Join the e-group skyspots-phg@yahoogroups.com for more info.

The paragliding events at the B.G.H. is part of "Tropicnic 2010," where proceeds from these the world-class Ocean Team will demonstrate free-fall stunts. A base jump will be held 3 p.m. at the South of Market Condominium, Global City. Ozaeta will also give a talk about skydiving and base jumping in the evening.

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KIKO MACHINE — BY MARK ABRA

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21-April 20) Today's theme with some difficult conversations with parents, bosses and authority figures. Only indicates the surface. Get below on, you tend to be happier about things.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Mixed signals are about religion, politics or anything connected with higher education, publishing, the media and the law. Friends and groups are supportive. Lean on Monday. (Travel business.)

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Although you might shudder this evening financially disappointed by the lapse of others (or lack of it), take it organized. Relations with bosses, parents and VIPs are good. (Money now.)

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Social occasions with partners and close friends. There could be arguments. Don't worry—you're in better because of the book of romance, from another country or another culture.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You could be worried about something that is work-related or your health-related. Consultancy, time or the law. Some worries disappear! (What one has at least.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Financial matters are disappearing this week. However, late in the day, watch words and avoid arguments. Make your health away. Tip!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) This is a very day to disagree with parents and bosses. Be patient with family members, even in the late, and accept better organized events. Everyone feels it best today!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Don't be victimized by your worries, today. Stop with tears very quickly (especially if you think of a friend). Need from work will alleviate your spirits.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Criticisms from older or more experienced people might get you down early in the day. Positive financial news this your hopes later.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) This is a good day to get back in touch with authority figures — bosses, parents, for example. Be patient. Listen to the day, all is love and laughter.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Friendships or relationships with or in publishing and higher education might disappoint you today. Something related you transport, however, take it the day.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Don't react to the criticism of others, especially if they are close to you. You're going to be misunderstood. In the day, do with what is positive in your life, and ignore the negatives. Relax!

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	5	4	1	7	8	2	6	3
1	6	3	4	2	9	8	7	5
7	2	8	6	5	3	4	1	9
4	3	2	8	6	7	9	5	1
5	9	7	3	4	1	6	2	8
8	1	6	2	9	5	7	3	4
6	4	5	9	1	2	3	8	7
2	8	1	7	3	4	5	9	6
3	7	9	5	8	6	1	4	2

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

		9						
4	2				8			3
1	5			3		6		
			4		2		5	8
				7				
6	9		1		5			
		6		1			7	9
5			3				2	6
						5		

Difficulty Level ★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Fundraising healthy lifestyle run in Taguig

CENTURY TUNA will hold CENTURY Tuna Superfoods Run 2010 on Feb. 21 at the Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City.

The Superfoods Run is organized in collaboration with the country's top running coach Rio de la Cruz of Runrio.

The event is also a fundraising activity for the benefit of the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), an agency devoted to the welfare of children and cooperates with the World Health Organization in immunization programs; and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), an international non-governmental organization working on issues regarding the conservation, research and restoration of the environment.

Century Canned Tuna celebrity endorsers Derek Ramsay and Superbook 2009 winners Vey Viron Lozin and Theresa Perpet joined the media launch hosted by athlete/ TV personality Bernie Chanco.

The Superfoods Run will feature has race events: 3km, 5km, 10km, and 21km. Male and female top finishers of each category will go home with big cash prizes plus special prizes from sponsors.

For the 21km race, the first place winners receive P42,000; second place gets P21,000; and third place gets P10,500. For the 10km race, first, second and third prize winners will win P20,000, P10,000 and P5,000, respectively. Winners in the 5km race will bag P10,000, P5,000, and P3,000. Lastly, 3km winners get P6,000, P3,000 and P1,500.

Warm-up of the big cash prizes, off-top finishers will receive special prizes from Century Tuna, Nike, Timex, and Reliant Valley plus RunRio Handbook shirts and medals.

In support of the event, Century Tuna also announced the launch of a Mapua's 'walking contest' entitled 'Para I am Preparing for the Century Tuna Superfoods Run 2010,' and will hold the Superfoods Quest and Stamina Challenge at selected Fitness First

Healthy salad and shake

LESTER SU, FOUNDER AND CEO OF LUSH Corporation, couldn't have been more right in following his dream. From a single cart, Lush Juice on put up Promo, Juice Avenue, Soho in Fronte, Nu Shoga Fusion and Black Bean, Lush health juice brands with a combined 450 branches across the country. With this growing trend in health and fitness, it was Su's mission to have people of all ages not enjoy delectable healthy drinks.

Fronte has developed two new products: fresh Fronte salad and Fronte yogurt shakes.

Fresh Fronte salad has chunks of freshly cut apples, tangerine, chicken, watercress and cinnamon nestled on a bed of crushed ice. On the other hand, Fronte yogurt shakes have velvety filling texture and various fruit options.

Nourishing, purifying wheatgrass

FRUIT MAGIC offers Fruit Magic Wheatgrass Boost, an all-natural certified organic. It is an instant cocktail of nutrient-and enzyme-rich wheatgrass and barley grass.

Its benefits include cleansing (natural healing via the plant's chlorophyll which helps purify the blood, anti-oxidants, fiber that aids the colon and enzymes that help utilize the metabolic process of key internal organs such as kidneys, liver and lymphatic), nourishing (multiple combination of powerhouse elements like amino acids, phytochemicals, fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and trace elements), and alkalizing properties (brings the most alkaline-rich plant among all vegetables and grasses, it effectively neutralizes acidity and contains calcium, magnesium, manganese, potassium, iron, bioflavonoids). Best taken on an empty stomach for better and better absorption, just dissolve one sachet in cold or room temperature water and drink first thing in the morning or in between meals.

Fruit Magic Wheatgrass Boost is available in over 70 Fruit Magic stores and 711 new Fruit outlets nationwide. Selected franchise offer fresh wheatgrass shots. Customers who will purchase five boxes will get a free blender bottle. For more information, call 364-9927, visit www.fruitmagic.com.ph.

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Charcoal helps alleviate gas pain, diarrhea, diabetes, vomiting

MODERN SCIENCE HAS IDENTIFIED herein 66 natural substances—grains by which Addie *everything* together and electromagnetism which is the field of living energy according to Tim Magnayon, US-certified hypnotherapist.

"The Power of Mentorship" by Dan Boyer shows how *Source* work, in harmony with the four forces, the greatest forces on earth.

Love yourself...Be narcissistic in nature, it simply tells you to respect your body as the temple of the spirit, therefore, love most intimate to a healthy lifestyle and uplifting thoughts and behavior.

Love others—because we are all connected to people and nature. Whatever we do has a rebound effect. In order to harness goodness, all our actions must be guided by the principle of giving and receiving.

Love your work—Greg Scott Reid in "The Millionaire Mentor" said, "When you do what you love and love what you do, you'll have success your whole life through." Thus, give your best in whatever you are doing right now...whether it's managing a bank or managing one's household.

Love your wealth...While this may sound materialistic, it isn't. The universe is abundant and as should you. We all need material things not only to survive but also to live in comfort. So, stay focused on abundance by adopting the philosophy of more, not less. While this checklist may seem incomplete, here is the attitude you need to ride on the path of love—God. Once you latch on to limitlessness, this is what you will attract—an unlimited supply of blessings.

Valentine checklist:

1. Stay clean. Bathe regularly. Use a rough towel to rub your skin from feet to neck. This stimulates lymphatic drainage. Use gentle guava soap. Rinse hair with sprinkle of cinnamon virgin coconut oil. For a beauty splash, mix ½ mini scoop of Lizada Enersan Red Ginseng in ½ cup of lukewarm water. Allow to dry on your face. Call 7267732, 7233878.

Keep your breath fresh always (through proper oral hygiene. Sow your devotion. Make it a habit to munch on fresh mint leaves or parsley at breach (before).

2. Get enough rest. Most people refuse to keep still until they get sick. Don't wait for this to happen.

3. Live by the green code. This means eating at least vegetables at one rest. The more raw, the better. Go easy on the dressing.

Healthy salad dressing: a squeeze of lemon and orange, drizzle of olive oil, 1 cup of assorted fresh fruits, dash of sea salt.

4. Detoxify. Eliminate toxic buildup with plenty of drinking water. Try this at home. Believe it or not, the lowly charcoal isn't just for barbecues, it has cleansing powers. Used for healing, it can alleviate gas pain, diarrhea, diabetes, vomiting. It is also a cure for snake bites.

Activated charcoal (from controlled wood burning) has absorptive capacity. You can't be sure as food searched from burning.

Mix 2 tablespoons of activated charcoal in a bath tub of warm water. Remain still for 10 minutes. Shower and scrub-down with cool water.

Ricardo Cortez tel. 02.3918168

Saving one's heart

If you suspect that your heart is weak, see a doctor immediately.

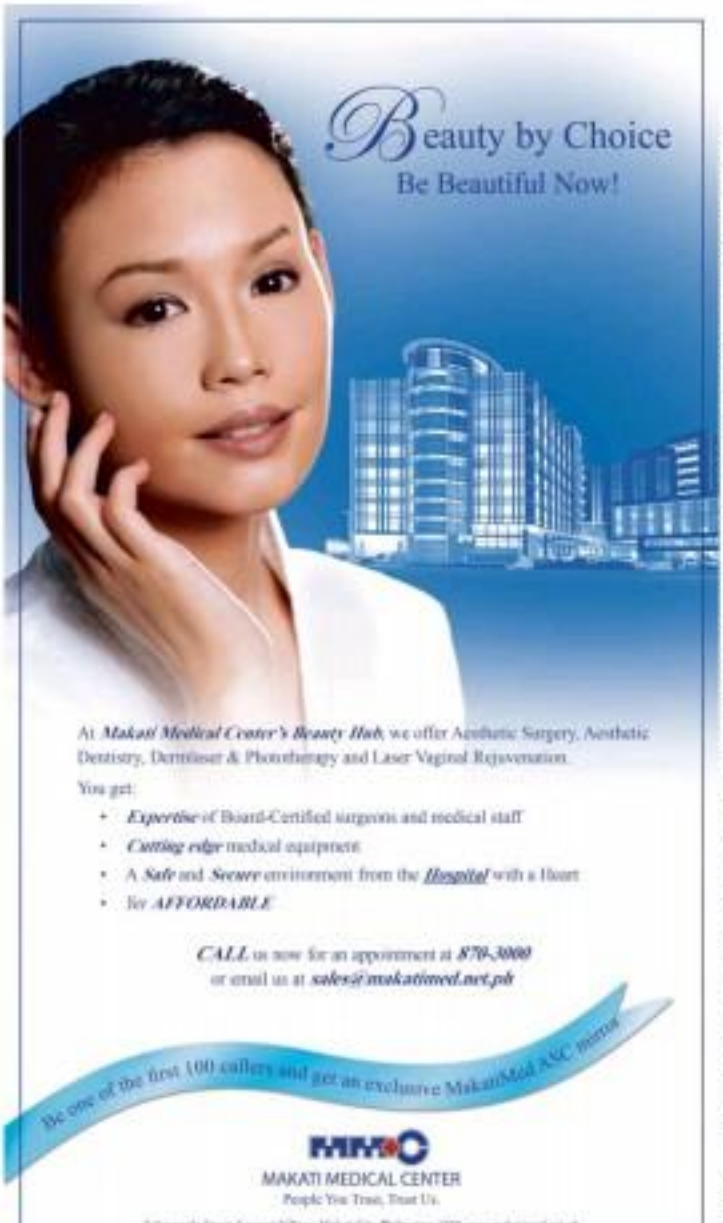
The following supplements are only but it's best to work with medical experts.

Co-enzyme Q10 (-) tx daily
Vitamin-B 100mg-2x daily
Magnesium 500mg (-) capsule daily
Fish oil/flaxseed oil 1-2 capsules
Calcium 1,000 mg daily
Exercise regularly
Watch your weight
Manage stress
Eat more fish and garlic.
Be happy
Cut back on bad cholesterol.

Source: Earl Mitchell Pharm MSc for the 21st Century

Allison today: "Love flows in me and through me."

Love and light!



How far can one's astral body travel?

"WHY IS IT THAT WE CAN'T MOVE OUR physical body or even make a sound, even when we shout?" Because you are out of your body. It's a direct gate out of his car, can he enter the car and make it run? The same reasoning holds true when we are out of our bodies.

"But why is it very difficult for us to get back to our physical bodies?" On the contrary the more skilled we are in the out of our physical selves we are next it. The reason we find it difficult to get back into our physical bodies is we panic or get worried. When this happens there is a lack of synchronization between the vibrations of your astral body and your physical body. If the two bodies are not in sync, they cannot easily reunite. But if you stay calm and do not panic, you will easily get back to your physical body and wake up normally.

"How far can one astral body travel?" So far as you want to, even as far as the moon and the stars and even as far as entire space.

One thing in the astral world, there is no darkness or physical obstacles. I remember the case of an American soldier who got shot in the leg during the Vietnam era, as a consequence of which he limped. Then he learned how to get out of his body with complete awareness and realized that in the astral realm his astral body was whole, he did not limp at all. That's why he enjoyed immensely his journeys out of the physical body. When he returned back to his physical body he limped once again.

Not all who experience astral travel are able to go to other places. In my own experience, which I am sure of anybody I just stay in the room I am in. I have not ventured out yet. I don't know why, although I want so much to be able to travel far from my physical room. Maybe there is an unconscious fear to let go. I don't know. Or, maybe there is something I am not to know yet.

Several planes

According to one esoteric school of thought...there are seven planes in the astral world. And each plane has seven subplanes. So there are many levels one can go to in the astral realm. And maybe, depending on one's consciousness or vibrations, one goes to one level and not to other levels. It is all a question of vibrations or harmony.

It is my belief that deep happens when our astral body is just a bit out of our physical body, maybe just halfway out. When it completely detaches itself from the physical, that's what we call astral projection. When it moves farther away from one's normal physical surroundings, that's what we call astral travel, as pointed out earlier.

The reason we sometimes feel a body jolt while sleeping is because our astral body suddenly goes back into our physical body.

There are many of developing centers to cover our astral body and travel out of the physical body. But this is best done under expert or professional guidance, because attempting to do so without expert can be dangerous. If it happens spontaneously and naturally, there is usually no danger to it. So there's nothing to be worried about. When this happens to you and you find yourself "waking up" outside your physical body and seeing yourself sleeping soundly on the bed, do not panic...just relax and enjoy it.

(To be continued)

Note: The next fundamentals, Karuna & Reiki, correction seminar will be held Feb. 11, 1-7 p.m., and the Inner Mind Development seminar will be on Feb. 20-21, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Rm. 308 Prime Plaza 1 Condo, Legaspi St., Greenhills, Makati. Call 8307260; Mobile 09189896 or email jaimetlazaro@yahoo.com

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Lazaro

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emerson G. Velarde

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50 years of Kenny Rogers—a TV special

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—Country music veteran Kenny Rogers, 71, is marking 50 years in the music biz with a star-studded TV special.

He doesn't want it to be a tribute, but rather "a celebration with some friends."

Dolly Parton, Alison Krauss, Lionel Richie and Wynonna Judd have signed on. "Kenny Rogers—The First 50 Years" will taper on April 10 at the MGM Grand At Foxwoods in Connecticut. The network airing the special will be announced later. AP

'Muziklaban' stages loud but tuneful acts

By Tony M. Pinpin Jr.
Contributor

ON ITS 13TH YEAR, "MUZIKLABAN," THE country's long-running showcase of Pinoy metal rock, has expanded its attractions to include rounds in extreme sports, skits and real-life films.

In the past, this annual gathering of metal-influenced bands and fans was simply filled by foreign acts such as Sepultura.

In the Level "Muziklaban Grand Finals Night" held recently at Mckinnon Open Parking Area, five amateur bands vied for top honors and recognition after beating thousands of hopefuls across the archipelago to survive to local and regional eliminations.

The event was a culmination of the "Muziklaban Road Challenge" in search of the next generation of Pinoy bands.

In the ultimate showdown, Rotoskato from Valenzuela City struck gold with its rocking funk-soul update reminiscent of POT. Opening with a grinding Funky intro bit, "Lakip," Rotoskato followed it up with "Lasenya," a rock jam that relieved Raintrack.

The four-member group capped its three-song run with a crowd-pleasing cover of POT's "Ulirin."

Formed in 2004, Rotoskato is composed of vocalist Roy Ekstasis, bassist Michael Villalobrew, drummer Harvey Glitter and guitarist Gilbert Shuzzons. The band's name, coined by its original bass player, was derived by jumbling the spelling of Kurukutoo—the town where the group hails from. The members said they were on the verge of disbanding when "Muziklaban" organizers came calling.

Trackwalkin from Cagayan de Oro City played true to the competition's positivist tenet towards extreme, unpredictable and intense music. Its members showed up in makeup a la Kiss and delivered a jaw-dropping set of death-tinged Goth and death metal rock numbers.

The good news is that the vocalists of the contending finalists could actually sing, their voices rocking loud and clear above the din of their bands' typical thrash-punk-ish onslaughts.

Second Squad from Baguio offered an original composition, "Drones," which sounded ready for the big leagues, especially with this rock star performance of its lead singer.

Rotoskato received a cash prize of P500,000 and, for a record deal and bragging rights as this year's "Muziklaban" champs. The band joins the select company of previously popular Pinoy rock acts and past Muziklaban top dogs Mayonnaise, Humilbrod Eggs, Cayanne and Eraserheads.

In between numbers by the contest finalists, guest bands sustained the entertainment level. Introvoist kept to its signature blend of frantic-but-catchy, yet melodic, death metal.

Slapshock proved its age-neutral past could be re-visited in the same mighty voltage as its current heavy hitter, "Cactus Beauty."

Multifaceted group Kitchenjaw made waves with its unusual concoction of pulp-fiction hard rock.

The panel of judges included Rockstar-slash-Rapper's Lasalle de Veyra, Quezon's Iza Tarsa, Greyhounds's Reg Rubio, Hydrogroove's club owner Ted Saycon and Universe media manager Shellee Wee.

Plenty such legend Joey "Pepe" Smith, "Muziklaban's" perennial mascot, provided some rolled-off-stight-ing.

Martin Nievera CD debuts at No. 1

THE TOP-SELLING ALBUMS IN THE Philippines for the week Jan. 25-31 based on OdYssey Music & Video stores chain's outlets/wide sales reports:

OPM

1) "In Always," Martin Nievera, Polyfloat Records; 2) "Romance Revisited: The Love Songs of Jose Mari Chan," Dominoes Basstrax, Universal Records; 3) "Rare Ni Nga," Willie Revillame, Star Records;

4) "Crusades," Nicki Pascual, Star Records; 5) "Exotic," Noel Cabangon, Universal Records; 6) "Made In Rio," Sarah Geronimo, Viva Records; 7) "Primo," Primo, MCA Music; 8) "Pray: The Hymnists Of The Holy Rosary," Various Artists, Star Records; 9) "Acoustic Duets," Ryo Ni Guys, Alpha Records;

10) "Songs Rediscovered 2," Jed Madela, Universal Records

Overall

1) "In Always," Martin Nievera, Polyfloat Records; 2) "Hits: The 30 Most Album," Girls' Generation, Universal Records; 3) "Romance Revisited: The Love Songs of Jose Mari Chan," Dominoes Basstrax, Universal Records; 4) "Rare Ni Nga," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 5) "Infinity: The 4th Album," TVXQ, Universal Records; 6) "Encanto," Nicki Pascual, Star Records; 7) "Rare Ni Nga," Willie Revillame, Star Records; 8) "Better Days," Jay Sean, MCA Music; 9) "The Fame Monster," Lady Gaga, MCA Music; 10) "Glee: The Music, Volume 2," Various Artists, Sony Music;

11) "Exotic," Noel Cabangon, Universal Records

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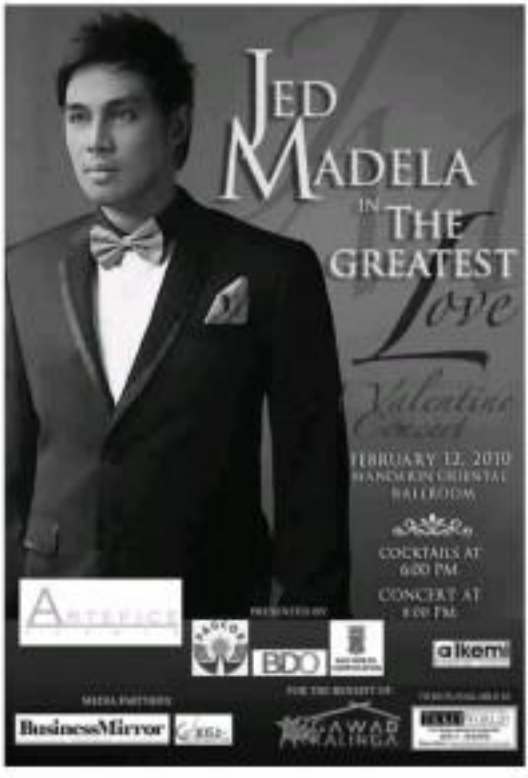

Hogging the headlines, by all means

Why top networks are launching new shows with unusually heavy star value

THE ENTERTAINMENT WORLD has been so staccatedly "happening" since this month, suggesting that 2010 will turn out to be an unusually busy and eventful year.

In TV, the strongest premiere of 1955, the year has energized the television, actor and personnel. ABC/ESPN and Fox 7 to offer more than usual, all in the name of expanded competition.

Only time will tell if the network TV's hopes to make will succeed, and eventually dislodge the traditional heavyweights, but the "third" channel's hold is definitely the strongest it's ever threatened to be.

Small wonder, then, that both ABC/ESPN and CBS/7 are premiering new telecasts each other directly within unusually heavy star value.

Of course the interest in the new "Jimmy Tuvey's Magkaibigan" and Judy Ann Santos-Ejercito series in years.

Aside from other big ones, "Jimmy Tuvey's Magkaibigan" top-billed the popular host teams of Cristobal Anderson and Kim Chiu. It looks like comic powerty that he thinks they're the numbers to bet on, despite that fact that, to date, Kim has generally revealed more of her limitations than her acting assets.

In fact, some decision-makers appear to be so gung-ho about them that Star Cinema has come out with a new film, "Paano Na Kaya?"

It's quite unusual for stars to have a TV series and a new film opening pretty much on the same time, so the "commercial" factor could even. The big question is, after the two premieres' opening dates, will the hot, new TV film live more to up to its producers' high expectations? Stay tuned.

Judy Ann is similarly flying high, because she not only has a new soap, but also an ongoing hit sitcom, and is currently shooting a feature film co-starring her real-life husband, Ryan Agoncillo. The latter is also in the mix, as he's set to debut in a new soap.

For her part, Smith is a formidable undercurrent to her own night, but appears to be hemmed by an excessively loony vanity, loud and colorless lack of finesse and spunk in her personal life. No longer a teenager, she has still to admit to having had a boyfriend, [illegible]

FILIPINMAKER Jordan Pascoe (gray, at far right) and the protest video.

Gay protest video: 'I Am Not Immoral'

By Boysel Sue Diego Jr.

IT WAS A GAY OUTRAGE, captured on video and still photographs, targeting the Facebook, Twitter and YouTube generation.

Enraged by the Commission on Elections (Comelec) decision to disqualify the gay party-list group "Ang Ladlad" from participating in the 2010 elections, Bicol-Cosmo, a fashion photographer, and Adrian Felisbuenga, an independent filmmaker, were moved to participate in "Iram Pilipinas" video project, "I Am Not Immoral."

Free of charge

Cosmo, a restaurant on the OMA 7 talent show "Celebrity Dance 3" this year, said: "I was upset. How dare they condemn gays to a shallow, general way."

Although he was very busy with both his fashion and restaurant work, Cosmo volunteered his services for the shoot, "free of charge."

Deadingbing, who has worked for QTV, BEY, Philippines and Myx, explained that "I am not immoral" is a "protest action" especially concerned for the digital era and the first X, Y, Z-dating-value.

"We have to enhance all other forms of protest, apart from rallying in the streets," Deadingbing said. The shoot was held on the day of the grand Gay Pride march in Makati, Dec. 5.

As part of the video's concept, various personalities—some famous, some anonymous, but all achievers in their fields—were interviewed to give testimonials and lend a humanistic face to the protest.

Not all gay

"The participants were not all gay, lesbians, bisexuals or transsexuals. Some were straight, like Step Nine Resistance," said Deadingbing, who sees a connection in this year's My Gay Pinoy! Philippines at 2010.

He is working to connect the video to the Facebook page www.iamIMM, after making it or films like "Outs," "Trust" and "Talking" which competed in the Hiroshima-ten in Los Angeles, California.

The Filipino video-filming journey to the Comelec decision," said Deadingbing. "I am straight, but I have many gay friends and relatives."

Her transition board is number and sexual preference visible: a person's "basic human right" not to be discriminated against, or threatened to punish for.

Act of courage

Cosmo said the video project is one of the bravest acts he has ever committed in his life—next to stepping on the national television for 'Celebrity Dance.'

Iram Pilipinas launched the video online last month.

"We plan to spread it in different gay networks and websites all over the world. We also hope to tap the media. We envision epidemic inside the power of the Internet to spread our message."

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2 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
3 DEAR JOHN
4 CASE 39
5 PAANO NA KAYA
6 [illegible]
7 AVATAR
8 SKI
9 MESSENGERS 2: THE SCARECROW
10 LEGION

MANILA

1 CASE 39
2 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?
3 DEAR JOHN
4 THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG
5 PAANO NA KAYA
6 MESSENGERS 2: THE SCARECROW
7 LEGION

METRO EAST

1 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
2 DEAR JOHN
3 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?
4 CASE 39
5 LEGION
6 AVATAR
7 PAANO NA KAYA
8 MESSENGERS 2: THE SCARECROW

MOVALICHES

1 CASE 39
2 MESSENGERS 2: THE SCARECROW
3 DEAR JOHN
4 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?

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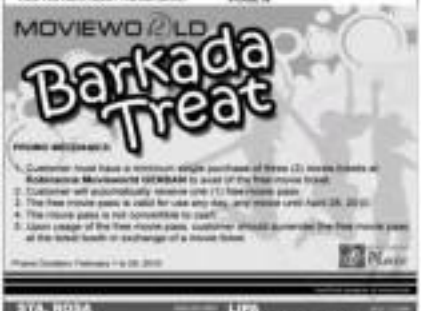
1 DEAR JOHN
2 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?
3 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
4 CASE 39



STA. ROSA

1 LEGION
2 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
3 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?
4 THE BLIND SIDE

LIPA

1 ALAN AHI THE CHRONICLES: THE RISE OF GUNDAM
2 PAANO NA KAYA
3 THE TOOTH FAIRY
4 COLD SOULS
5 LEGION

CABANATUAN

1 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
2 LEGION
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 THE BLIND SIDE

STARMILLS

1 PAANO NA KAYA
2 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS
3 AVATAR
4 UNIVERSAL SOLDIER: REGENERATED
5 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
6 LEGION

IMUS

1 PAANO NA KAYA
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4 THE BLIND SIDE
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ANGELES

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TACLOBAN

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DUMAGUETE

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3 PAANO NA KAYA

BACOLOD

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3 THE REBOUND
4 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?
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ILOILO

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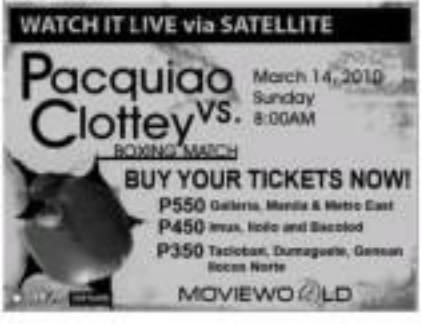
2 PAANO NA KAYA
3 THE IMAGINARIUM OF DR. PARNASSUS
4 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
5 THE TOOTH FAIRY
6 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?

GENSAN

1 PREDATOR
2 CIRQUE DU FREAK: THE VAMPIRE'S ASSISTANT
3 PAANO NA KAYA
4 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL

ILOCOS NORTE (MOW DPEN)

1 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL
2 PREDATOR
3 PAANO NA KAYA



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IMAX

BLIND SIDE

FORUM

metro manila

NORTH EDSA

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4 PRINCESS & FROG
5 DEAR JOHN
6 CASE 39
7 DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?
8 THE PRINCESS & THE FROG
9 LEGION
10 MESSENGERS 2: THE SCARECROW
11 THE BLIND SIDE
12 PAANO NA KAYA

MALL OF ASIA

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MEGAMALL

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FAIRVIEW

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SOUTHMALL

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CITY SAN LAZARO

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VALENZUELA

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EASTWOOD

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CITY BICUTAN

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12 LEGION

CITY SUCAT

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CITY SECTION

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luzon

CITY PUMPANGA

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CITY CLARK

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CITY BACOLOR

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CITY TARLAC

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CITY LUCENA

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CITY BAGUIO

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CITY ESL NORTH

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CITY BAGUIO

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CITY MARILAO

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CITY LEGAZPI

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CITY NAGA

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CITY LEGAZPI

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CITY SORSOGON

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CITY LUCENA

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CITY LOLO

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visayas - mindanao

CITY DAVAO

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CITY CEBU

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CITY ILOILO

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CAGAYAN DE ORO

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CITY BACOLOD

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14 DEAR JOHN
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16 LEGION
17 PAANO NA KAYA

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Are Edu, Pinky still a couple?

AN ASSUMING NEWS & PUBLIC AFFAIRS reporter wants Dum to say truth to the face that Ted Failon and Pinky Webb are now a couple. "I think Ate Montano and Pinky Webb are still together but they are just keeping it hush-hush so Pinky won't have to go on some horrible of Edu's candidacy. The rumor about Ted and Pinky is just meant to stress up their radio program."

I texted Edu about this. His reply: "Hi Dolly! Out of the great total respect I have for Pinky, her family, and the network, I would rather not comment on that. I hope you understand. I'm doing well."

As we do, Edu!

DOLLY WOGO

Dolly Anne Carvajal

JERICHO Rosales, a rebel at heart

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Walter Mart

At the taping of "Bandarita," Carleen Aguilar reported "Starstruck" manager Zoraff Lim for Cristine Reyes. The lad is sad. He doesn't like it one Cristine or not. She was no friend to find out that it was just Cristine's look-alike. "Elizabethan manners also right," she stressed.

Pinky-off over Dennis Trillo happened many controversies ago but I guess the sight of Cristine would, indeed, open old wounds.

Sometimes we think things are over but we don't feel that it's really finished. When our heart and mind don't speak the same language, we badly need an interpreter.

I heard that my favorite late night weekend newscasters will soon be out of a program. Many of my friends have often wondered why the hi-pass network has not given that pretty anchor the kind of break she deserves. Even relegated to a 12:30 a.m. Saturday and Sunday slot, she has actually inspired a number of fans to listen not one, but two clubs.

It's always been a mystery to me why GMA-7 has kept her on the sidelines for so long. Two of my friends from rival networks actually lit up when they heard this news. It's obvious that both channels would be more than willing to give this anchor better exposure, given a chance.

Jericho Rosales and BC Concepcion had a story conference for their upcoming project. Things are going well for Echo because he has boosted up and it no longer the "rebel" as he used to be called on ABS-CBN.

His faith and determination to pursue his love for music have transformed him into a new man. He told Mother Lily and friends Aiko Melendez who want to produce a movie for him. The former rebel now has all the reasons to excel.

Simone Rowan opened a restaurant, KICC Plate, in Xavierville Ave. Will it be the key to success for the former PBB champion?

Guess list

■ R singer-actress wants her angst about her super strict mom be screaming in the closing scene... which some her co-stars do much for vocalizing over the high notes. What she needs to raise our her displeasure at things between her and her mom went out in a cuss note.

■ The cast and crew of a defunct sitcom were pissed as one of the lead actresses of the soap. The show folded abruptly because due no longer wanted to report for taping. The drama will now see more intense than on cam.

Alan Sagaoinit celebrates the Day of Hearts with a very special show, "Alan's Love Life Revealed" on Feb. 12 in SM Mandaue Cinema 11, and Feb. 13 in SM Cebu Cinema 2 at 7:30 p.m. Ana and her band will serenade guests with an all-OPM repertoire. She will be joined by another Visayan, Jude Fernandez. For tickets, see 0917-9052681.

E-mail: annewingbolanogrido@yahoo.com

GERALD Anderson and Kim Chiu

Hogging the headlines

From page D1

as the line argues the energy in last fall, sometimes are merely ridiculously premature—at best.

Clearly, Sarah needs to develop herself, not just as a star, but also as a trusting person, if she wants her portrayals to be believable and truly felt.

Our wonders, in fact, how she'll fare in her challenging dramatic movie with Judy Ann, who's had more than enough performing and life experiences to act on the present her with hope a doesn't happen, but it is cause for concern.

In a sense, Sarah and Kim Chiu appear to be facing the same acting problems that Thelma Bolt being rushed into young adult stardom—without the talent and character development needed to make the difficult transition work.